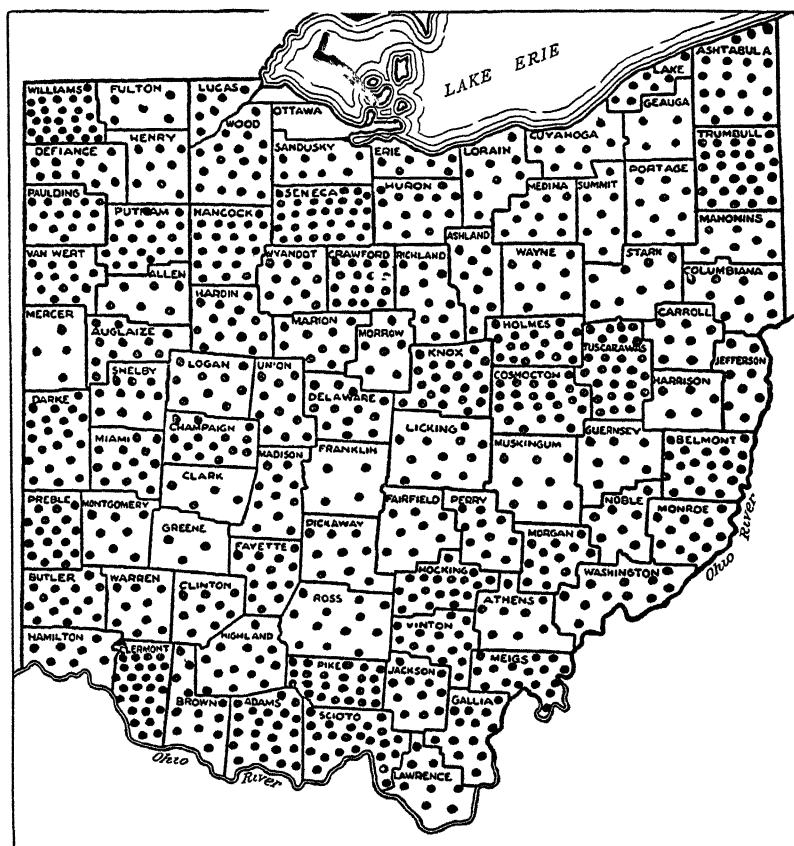


74. A New England Country Church

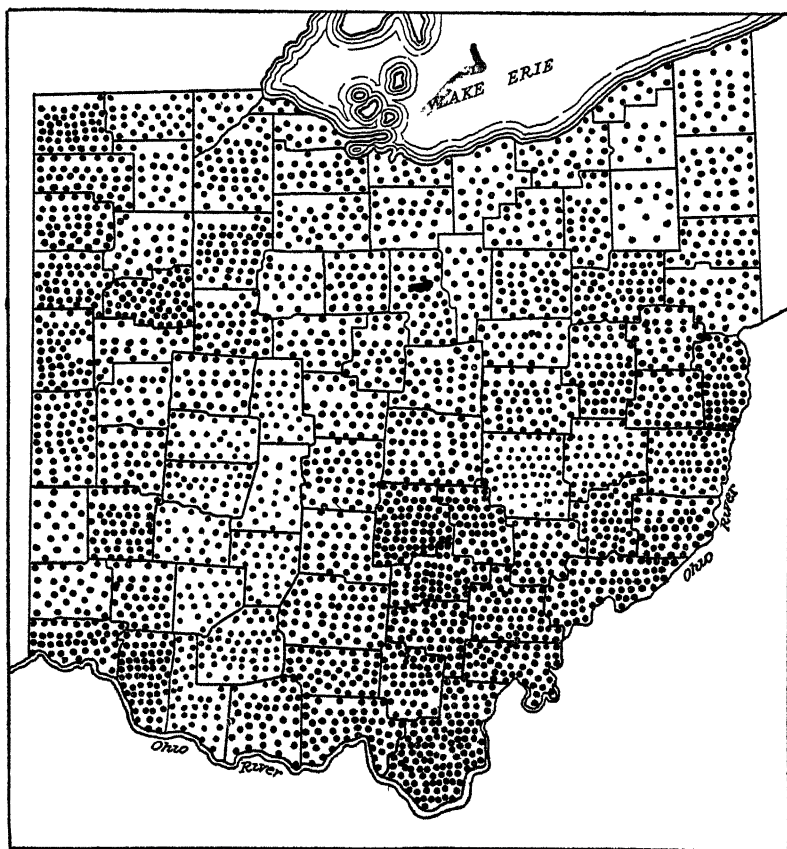


75. 1,058 Abandoned Rural Churches in Ohio, Distributed by Counties

Source: From C. E. Lively's "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio," *Ohio State University Agricultural Extension Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 17.

Withal, when checked by approved standards of church efficiency, this region easily ranks third.

3. *The Southern Region.* This includes all territory south of the Mason and Dixon line and the Ohio River, east of the Mississippi, together with Louisiana, but excluding the Appalachian region. It is the most distinctly rural part of America, with three-fourths of the people living in the country. The communities are



76. 3,291 Rural Churches in Ohio with Non-Resident Pastors, Distributed by Counties

Source: *Ibid.*, p. 15.

of the open country type. A one-crop system tends to give way to diversification. Farm units are smaller than in the North and the per cent of tenantry greater than in any other section. The large Negro population constitutes the chief tenant class. The white population is almost exclusively old American stock. Economic inequality and social stratification are more evident than elsewhere.

With the exception of Maryland and Louisiana, the South is the

land of Protestantism. The average for the area is 12 leading denominations, the Baptists and Methodists dominating. No other section has such excessive overchurched and at the same time so many communities unchurched by Protestant bodies.

The churches of the rural South are its most important and vigorous community institutions, and not until the latter half of the twenties did they begin to lose heavily. The Methodists' and immersionists' churches with their Circuit-Systems had a high mortality. The Negro churches suffered from the migration of people to the urban centers of the South and North.²³ Thus in this region, as in all others, there was a net loss in the number of churches. It was equal to that of the Colonial area.²⁴

Since 1930 churches have improved their status. They have had a sharp gain in membership, and the ratio of church attendance to the total population also has gained.

This region shares with others the village-centering trend of rural interests, including church membership. Churches have a far larger inactive membership here than elsewhere. The emotional sects that have sprung up so freely in the Far West and Middle West have made the least headway in the South.²⁵

The churches suffer extremely from an absentee and itinerant ministry. Of the strictly open-country churches probably about 70 per cent are served by non-resident ministers. Despite this, and thanks to the wide prevalence of a circuit system, only one other region has so few churches without ministers. A very large majority of the churches have only once-a-month services.²⁶

The ministry is poorly equipped, poorly paid, and restless. However, surveys indicate that since 1930 there has been a decided increase of professionally trained preachers in this region. At the same time the pay has fallen to a low level, often to a no fixed salary.²⁷

The social and economic cleavage is often reflected in separate churches for farm-owners, tenants, and the professional and prosperous business class. In the textile-mill towns that are also agri-

²³ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

²⁶ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

cultural service centers, the leading denominations will often maintain separate churches for the villagers proper and the mill-hands.²⁸

On the whole, however, the white Protestant churches reach a larger per cent of the total town and country population than such churches reach in other regions.

Generally, among white and colored churches alike, social programs of any sort are prevented by theological bias and denominational jealousy.²⁹

The annual revival has been almost universal. It is a midsummer occurrence upon which the church depends for recruiting its membership. There are, however, indications that revivalism is on the decline.³⁰ When measured by generally accepted standards of social adequacy, the churches of this region stand at the bottom of the list for all America.

4. *The Southern Mountain Region.* It is a submarginal area embracing 250 counties of nine states. Agriculture is difficult, most of it being part-time and self-sufficient farming. Timber and mineral resources are extensively exploited. Isolation has been extreme; poverty, general; and living more primitive than in any other large area of the United States.

Outside the few industrial villages, where a few foreigners and some Negroes are found, the people are of old Anglo-Celtic stock. Because of their retarded civilization they have been called "our contemporaneous ancestors." They are extremely individualistic, with characteristics and customs of early frontiersmen.

The church is even more Protestant than in the rest of the South. Campbell says a majority are of some form of Baptist persuasion.³¹ Denominational loyalty is stronger and more controversial here than is common anywhere else.

Parishes are small, averaging only about 8 square miles.

There is the same absentee ministry and infrequency of service as in the South generally. In addition, the hiring of a new minister annually tends to be the practice. Far more of the clergy earn their

²⁸ Ibid., p. 322.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 314-315.

³⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

³¹ J. C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland*.

living by some occupation outside their calling than anywhere else. In 1931 Miss Hooker found in a study of all denominations in 17 Highland counties that 80 per cent of the ministers were wholly without college or seminary training. In seven Highland states in 1926 two-thirds of the ministers in seven denominations were in the same class.⁸²

The church is entirely of the pioneer type, following the customs that once prevailed on the frontier of the West and North.

Missionary aid has been poured in from Northern sources, but not always to the benefit of the situation.

For some years the industrial invasion of the region has been slowly changing its economic and social life generally for the worse.

5. *The Northwest Region.* This embraces Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Eastern Montana. Agriculture dominates. Spring wheat is the chief crop. Farms are very large, except in Minnesota, and their number is growing. Tenantry, less prevalent than farther east, is on the increase. Social life is more or less in a pioneer stage.

The population is sparse and lacks cohesion. The stock is largely Scandinavian and German, with traditions of coöperation.

Antagonism between town and country has long been widespread and intense. However, the village-centering trend of rural interests is modifying it.

There is an average of 15 leading denominations in this region. A good third of the people are Catholic. The region stands fourth in the number of communities without Protestant churches.

The western semi-arid part of this region has suffered severely from drought and depression in recent years, causing a heavy exodus of population. Thus from a region of growing churches, it has become one of decline.

One outstanding characteristic of the region is the relatively small per cent of farm owners reached by the church. No parallel to this is found except in the Range and Pacific regions. As usual, the tenant class is not being reached.

The churches of this region except in the villages are compara-

⁸² Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands*, The Home Mission Council, 1933, p. 162.

tively well served by ministers. About one-fourth of them have full-time, resident pastors. Here the circuit system, or "ministerial vivisection," severely affects the town, village and open country clergy—almost as much as it does in the South. The data seem to indicate that fewer ministers here follow other occupations than generally elsewhere.

In other respects the churches of this region are similar to those in the Range region, in the West, or in the Middle West.

6. *The Prairie Region.* This includes Kansas, Nebraska, and part of Oklahoma. A considerable portion of this region lies in the Dust Bowl—an area rendered almost uninhabitable in 1936 by prolonged drought and wind erosion. It is a country of large, highly mechanized wheat ranches, with much tenantry and considerable seasonal labor. Towns are not numerous. The population is fairly homogeneous, with some admixture of foreign strains, but its culture is rather primitive. Before the unwise utilization of the land and adverse climatic conditions laid it waste, it was in some respects one of the most prosperous and progressive agricultural areas.

Religion is well established. Four-fifths of the people are Protestant. Leading denominations average 15. Next to the South this region has the most churches of any region in proportion to population. Next to the South and Middle West it has the highest percentage of population in the churches.

Church decline has resulted from the calamitous conditions that have befallen parts of the area. However, it has been the churches of the old American pioneers rather than those established by European immigrants that have suffered. Those of the former have gradually died, while those of the immigrants have survived.

The status of the two types as revealed in a study of 266 churches in three rural counties of eastern Nebraska by A. B. Hollingshead is shown in Table 66.

It is interesting to note that the churches of the old Americans merely "saved souls," competed with one another, and died, while those of the immigrants stood for organized community life, and survived.

This region seems to have a fairly settled and adequate supply of

Table 66

RELATIVE DECADENCE OF PIONEER AND IMMIGRANT CHURCHES
IN NEBRASKA IN 1935 ^a

Group	Per Cent of Total Organized	Per Cent Closed	Per Cent Alive in 1935
Pioneer	70.7	90.9	47.2
Immigrant	29.3	9.1	52.8

^a A. B. Hollingshead, "The Life Cycle of Nebraska Rural Churches," *Rural Sociology*, June, 1937, pp. 180-191.

ministers, tho pastorates are short. Only two other regions have so many full-time resident pastors, and only three have fewer pastorless churches. In the villages three-fourths of the pastors are in residence. No other region equals this. For the open country churches it takes third rank in the percentage of resident pastors.

In material things the churches of this region seem to lag behind general economic conditions.

7. *The Southwest Region.* This includes Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and part of Missouri. It is a region of contrasting physical and economic features, including mountains and plains, arid and well-watered areas. The western part of Oklahoma and the panhandle of Texas lie in the Dust Bowl. Agriculture is generally confined to one crop, tho that crop is not the same in the several parts of the area.

This is the meeting ground of the South and the West, with a civilization that savors of both. The stock is often quite as heterogeneous as the country is diversified.

In three states more than half the farmers are tenants. Poverty prevails.

In the churches denominationalism is strong. Sects are numerous, and duplicate organizations of similar bodies are common. In part this is because there are Northern and Southern branches of several sects. Thirteen general denominations enroll 90 per cent of the religious element. The church is largely Protestant. Overchurching is not so pronounced as in most sections. The section is char-

acterized, like the Range and Pacific, by a marked degree of failure of religion to lay hold of the people. The Protestant faith does not claim more than 12 to 13 per cent of the population.

The churches have few full-time resident ministers. Many churches are pastorless, and a large per cent of the country churches are on circuits.

There is here a large tenant class, which the church, as generally elsewhere, fails to reach.

On most other points the church status of this section closely resembles that of the South.

8. *The Range Region.* The mountain states of the West make up this area. Rough and semi-arid, there is very little improved land. Stock grazing, dry-farming, and irrigation dominate. Naturally, settlements are scattered, and the homesteaders restless and isolated. It is decidedly the frontier area of today.

The stock is chiefly old American but with a foreign element constituting about 25 per cent of the population. There are a good many Mexicans in the southern parts of the region.

The rural church, if we except that of the Mormons, is the least flourishing of any part of America. Like the civilization in general of that region, it struggles for a foothold. Fewer denominations are found than elsewhere except in New England. The Mormon church enrolls more than half the religious population in two states and nearly a fourth of it in two more. For the whole region Protestants and Catholics are about equal in strength.

The region is marked by underchurching and religious indifference such as we meet in no other section. Parishes are large, averaging as much as 75 square miles. There is one church to about 1,200 of the population. About half of the communities and a fifth of the population are without Protestant churches.

As one would expect of a growing country, the churches here are generally growing. Mission-aid has been extended out of all proportion to need; for it inspires selfish denominational ambitions which keep alive churches that are superfluous and neglect wholly unchurched areas. But for this, some churches that were better dead

would have succumbed.³³ Here the churches of the "emotional sects" rise and decline rapidly.³⁴ Since 1930 marked gains in church membership and some rise in the ratio of attendance to the whole population are reported.³⁵

Save only the Pacific region, the proportion of resident ministers, especially in the towns, is the largest. There is so much centering of church forces in the towns that the church has been called "the church of the center."³⁶ During the late twenties the non-resident country preachers increased until two-thirds of the open-country churches were served by them.³⁷ No section has so great a transient, "vagrant" and short-tenure ministry as this one.

Tenantry is not excessive here and, contrary to the rule, more of this class than of the landowners are church members.

The Sunday School is in greater favor and more flourishing than the church. There are many independent schools. Altogether their enrollment exceeds church membership. Young people's societies are generally found in connection with the churches. Revivals are largely depended upon to recruit church members.

The general expenses of the church in this and the Pacific region are higher than in other regions.

While the Range is a man's country, the church is a woman's organization. Men constitute probably less than a third of the membership of the Protestant churches. The church was one of the things the homesteader left behind when he came west. Nor has the church followed him as it ought. Hence "absence of church has become a habit" and 'mid unstable and transient conditions indifference prevails.³⁸ The late comers, however, are more responsive than the "old timers." The churches of this region, when scored by reasonable standards of adequacy, stand near the bottom.

9. *The Pacific Region.* The Pacific coast states are included in this area. The widest variety of conditions are found. California has dry-farming, dairying and extensive fruit growing, but Oregon and Washington have more lumbering than general farming or

³³ Helen O. Belknap, *The Church of the Changing Frontier*, p. 68.

³⁴ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-216.

³⁵ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304.

³⁷ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

³⁶ Belknap, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³⁸ Belknap, *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 68.

fruit culture. Economically, it is a prosperous region. More than in any other save the Colonial the people are concentrated in urban districts. Church membership falls lowest.

Here as on the Range, the churches are growing. In recent years a large number of migrants from the Dust Bowl have caused a relatively large growth of church membership and a slightly greater ratio of church attendance to the total population.³⁹ Twenty-eight per cent of the rural churches were receiving mission aid in the twenties. In only about a third of the communities did it have other than a purely sectarian object. Here, as on the Range, the "emotional sects" flourish, giving rise to a high birth rate and a high death rate among the churches.

As in all other sections, there is a definite trend of church activities to the village centers. Probably half the membership of village churches is from the farms.⁴⁰ Here, as elsewhere, the church encounters keen competition from a variety of social organizations and activities that offer more attractive social programs.

This region leads in full-time resident pastors in the town and country churches. The open country congregations are the best supplied of any region with full or part time ministers.

The population is heterogeneous. There are all kinds and sorts of native Americans mingled with a fairly large foreign-born element.

There are almost as many leading denominations here as in the Middle West. Catholics and Protestants are about equal. Only the Range has more rural communities without Protestant churches. Again, next to the Range, this region has the largest average number of rural inhabitants per church. Parishes are about the size of those in the Middle West. In 1936 pastors' salaries were the lowest of all regions for full-time resident ministers, tho better than the South for non-resident ministers.⁴¹

The tenant class here does not respond to the churches' appeal as do farm owners.

As on the Range, the Sunday School enrollment exceeds the church membership.

³⁹ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304.

⁴⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 209. ⁴¹ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

All in all, the churches of this region score higher on the average, when graded according to "par standards," than those of any other region.

Reasonable Standards

From the foregoing summary of conditions as reported largely by the surveys of the Institute of Social and Religious Research and the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, numerous characteristics of the rural church appear. Conspicuous among them in varying degrees from region to region are overchurching, some underchurching, church stagnation and abandonment, ministerial "vivisection," poorly trained, poorly paid, and restless pastors, insufficient local organization, sectarian rivalry and community neglect, inadequate physical equipment, failure to reach all classes, the lack of proper religious education and the absence of social programs.

These shortcomings trace to many general cultural and historical causes as well as to numerous regional and purely rural factors of development and change. Apart from measures that will alter the economic and cultural status of the region in which they prevail, many of these problems defy solution, for institutions cannot be treated apart from their environment. Other problems of the rural churches are within reach of intelligent social effort. In fact, in every section of America there are churches that have successfully grappled with them and become effective social agencies.⁴² The actual experiences of these churches were taken by the Institute of Social and Religious Research as a basis for setting up a working program for rural churches, known as the "par standard." This is defined "not as an ideal, but as a measurable example of what the church may, in all reasonableness, expect to attain."⁴³

In bare outline the salient points of the standard may be stated:

1. An auditorium adequate for church services; rooms and equip-

⁴² See E. de S. Brunner, *Churches of Distinction in Town and Country*, and *Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches*.

⁴³ Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States*, 1923, p. 167.

ment sufficient for educational, social and recreational purposes; a playground; and a comfortable parsonage.

2. Sunday School and other educational and missionary activities maintained regularly thruout the year.

3. A regular church budget, including benevolences raised by an every-member canvass.

4. A resident full-time pastor paid a living salary plus a house.

5. A program of weekly Sunday worship, a mid-week meeting, community-wide work with all classes not served by other churches, definite goals of work to be set up by the congregation for each year, and organized activities for all the various age and sex groups of the community.

6. Coöperation with all other churches, denominational and interdenominational agencies, and welfare agencies for community betterment.

Community Churches

Many of the chief problems of country churches can be solved only by coöperation. In fact, this may be the only way that the crisis confronting them can generally be met. Various schemes have been worked out calling for denominational coöperation for uniting weak churches; for organizing a number of open country churches into one parish centering in a village, under what is known as the "Larger Parish" plan; and for similar devices of readjustment. Thus under one form or another the community church has appeared.

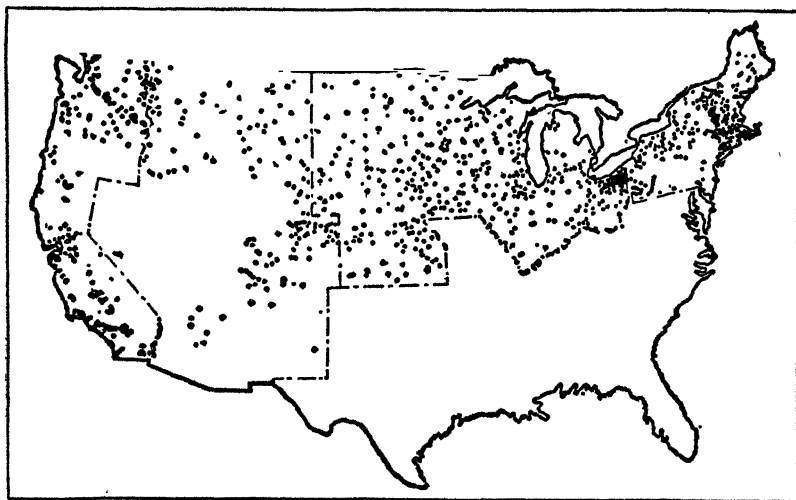
The extent and mode of the movement for the organization of the community church was disclosed in a survey conducted during the twenties by the Institute of Social and Religious Research.⁴⁴ Every section of the United States except the South was canvassed. That section was omitted because there was no evidence that the movement had made any headway there. Every effort was made to locate the new type of church. Many so-called community churches were, however, found to be such only in name, hence only

⁴⁴ See Robert W. McCulloch, "The New Church of the Rural Community," *The Survey*, Vol. 52, No. 6, Dec. 15, 1926, pp. 369-371.

the churches that had so completely altered the conventional organization as to fellowship persons of all Protestant faiths were listed.

The survey disclosed a total of 977 such churches. They were most numerous in southern New England, Ohio, Washington, California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Kansas. Figure 77 shows the distribution.

Four distinct types were recognized by the Institute. (1) The *denominational* type represents a union where one or more churches



77. Distribution of United Rural Churches

The dots on the map show the location of 977 united churches found in the survey, which covered every part of the United States except the South.

Source: R. W. McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

have left their own denomination to merge in another and pass under its control.⁴⁵ These were the most numerous of new type churches. A total of 491 was found. They were most common in the Far West. (2) The *federated* church is a union where each of the uniting bodies keeps its affiliations with its own denomination.

⁴⁵ This type of church is fully discussed by Elizabeth Hooker in *United Churches*, Harper and Bros., 1927.

There were 312 such churches. They were most numerous in the East. (3) A third type is called *undenominational*, since neither the new church nor any of the bodies uniting in it hold any denominational connections whatsoever. Only 137 of these were found. They were chiefly in the Middle West. (4) The fourth type is called *affiliated*, since a loose connection is kept for certain purposes with some denomination. Such churches are of recent origin and few in number. There were but 37 listed.

In these four types of new churches were found Protestants of fifty or more faiths, but chiefly the Northern Baptist, the Congregationalist, the Methodist Episcopal, and the Presbyterian faiths. These communions furnished 88 per cent of the 928 denominational churches that had actually entered into the unions.

It is significant that the movement is essentially a small village and open country phenomenon. Less than 4 per cent of the new churches were found in places of from 2,500 to 5,000 population. Five-sixths of the number were in communities of 1,000 or less population.

This development is both new and nation wide. Only 44 of the churches whose history could be traced dated as far back as 1912. Generally the reorganization had been brought about by the efforts of lay leaders. The motive for union was in most cases the desire to do away with overchurching. It did not seem to be anti-denominational. That it has in a measure accomplished denominational elimination appears from the fact that the new church was the only church in about 45 per cent of the half of the total number of Union churches studied. It was the only Protestant church in about 55 per cent of the communities involved in the sample.

These churches are reported to have the favor and financial support of non-church people in their respective communities. They have a better paid, better educated, and a more settled ministry than churches of the ordinary kind. They are able to carry on unusually successful welfare work in their communities and tend to fulfill the social function which a growing number of people would assign this institution. In other words, the church becomes a means rather than an end, an agency to build up communities.

However, the new type in general seems to be rather unstable, with many tendencies to frequent reorganization. Altho there is a growing attitude among the leading Protestant denominations to favor the Union movement, the depression has brought a counter trend. New competition has arisen from the efforts of unemployed preachers to revive closed and unneeded churches in many parts of the land.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Why have rural churches generally not consolidated along with rural schools?
2. What neglected activities for the community good would you like to see rural churches with which you are familiar sponsor?
3. To which of the following would you assign the most influence in causing rural church decline, a shrinking country population, a shrinking agricultural economy, a changing community, or a loss of interest in religion?
4. How far, if at all, are the objectives of the rural church changing?
5. Which is likely to contribute more to the social life and progress of a rural village, spirited competition or harmonious coöperation among the churches?
6. Do farm families attend church as a unit more or less than they did before the automobile and the radio?
7. Which makes the greater appeal to rural youth, the church or the non-church organizations of the rural community with which you are most familiar?
8. Is the church of your community influencing other institutions or is it more influenced by them?
9. What is the attitude of the church of your community to the government's program of service for farmers? What should its role be in this respect?

RURAL PLAY AND RECREATION

The Nature of Play

WHATEVER else it may be, play is the expenditure of surplus physical and psychic energy. To act is animal and human; all normal beings are impelled to exert themselves, and when this is done naturally, spontaneously and under circumstances that give pleasure and emotional satisfaction, we call it play.

Obviously play and work are closely associated on the scale of activities. Where one leaves off and the other begins, depends upon the individual and a multitude of conditioning circumstances. What may be play for one will be work for another, and *vice versa*; or what may be play at one time may become work at another time; or the reverse.

There are, of course, certain classes of activities that we customarily call work and other classes that we call play. The two are generally distinguished by the presence or absence of vocational and remunerative factors. Patently a National League ball game is play or recreation for the spectators, but work for the players, since it is the latter's vocation and means of livelihood. Thus what is one man's trade is another man's play. But, clearly enough, numerous activities are deemed to be diversions by the masses and for the masses of men.

There are two great classes of diversions, which we may designate as natural and artificial. The natural are really vocations that for society as a whole have become antiquated. Hunting, fishing, camping in the open, once means of living, are now means of play for a higher civilization. Likewise, in some measure, cultivating the soil and growing plants, outgrown means of existence for the majority of people in western society, are often reverted to for pure

pleasure by those who have the opportunity. The artificial activities are those that have been designed for pleasure alone. These include games of all kinds, the dance, the drama, and various other activities.

A broader classification results if we consider more specific human wants and their satisfaction. Among them are: (1) the desire for new experiences; (2) the desire for sociability; (3) the desire for activity; and (4) the desire for conflict and mastery.¹

Under the first group will fall in large part hunting and fishing, camping, dramatics, the moving pictures. The second group will include the dance, the "sociable," the picnic, and numerous other provisions for association for its own sake. In the third group will be found field sports and athletics. To the fourth belong all sorts of games of contest.

Conditions Determining the Character of Play

The conditions determining the character of play are so many that it would be unprofitable to try to catalogue them. However, we shall try to indicate certain outstanding ones that have particular significance in relation to rural society.

1. *Surplus energy.* If there is a superabundance of physical strength and animal spirit left over from the struggle for a livelihood, people will normally want to utilize it in play that is strenuous. Athletic diversions will appeal; not necessarily to the exclusion of other types of recreation, but preferably to them. If there is only a little margin of physical energy left, there will either be no play at all, something of a psychic nature, or perhaps some sort of excessive indulgence of the appetites.

Farming makes heavy drafts on physical strength and relatively little on mental energy. As a rule, during the busy season at least there will not be much surplus energy available for strenuous play. The never-ending call to work at the never-finished labor of the farm does not foster active play. The normal expression would be

¹ Davis, Barnes, and others, *Introduction to Sociology*, D. C. Heath and Co., 1927, p. 768.

some sort of mental activity. However, whatever the outlet should be, many individuals do not rise above the physical plane, so that when its possibilities are exhausted they have no taste for anything else and lapse into pure idleness. How far this applies to farmers as a class is a mooted question. If it be true that the occupation has selected an unusually large number of the stolid and ox-like, then we should expect to find but little zest for play on the psychic plane.

As will appear from play data farther on, there is a marked tendency for the mature farm population to prefer an inactive type of recreation. Indoor games, visiting, and picnics seem to appeal more than strenuous outdoor games or active indoor sports. It has been said: "Tongue exercise is what is more needed in the country than biceps exercise."

2. Surplus energy ordinarily implies *leisure*, else there will not be opportunity for play. Much depends upon how the spare time is distributed, whether it occurs at regular or irregular intervals and in brief or long periods, as to what sort of play one can pursue. Urban work is commonly done in fairly short hours and at stated times, giving more definite periods for leisure. On the farm the shifts are long, tasks irregularly ordered, and leisure more limited and uncertain. In the growing season there is little spare time of any sort. Under these different conditions the city man can make provision for regular recreation, but the country man finds it difficult to plan the use of his broken leisure hours. There is, however, a very great diversity of conditions in agriculture and no statement as to the amount and disposal of leisure can be made that will fit everywhere.

3. *Occupations*, therefore, constitute a third condition determining play, not only because they govern leisure, but because they select people of different types and help to develop in them different temperaments. Take, for instance, an industrial wage earner in comparison with the owner-manager of the plant. The one is care-free insofar as the occupation is concerned when he is off the job; the other can hardly leave his responsibilities behind when he locks up shop. The one may find his work dreadfully monotonous and uninteresting; the other, for all his burdens, may find

his challenging and stimulating. Presumably men will emerge from the two situations with different dispositions and attitudes. If we contrast the farmer's occupation with these, we find a man who is both manager and laborer. But he is never carefree, because he must live in his occupation; and never greatly stimulated, for Nature, the ultimate manager, always restricts his operations. Inevitably the farmer's occupation is much more a part of his life than are those occupations from which men can escape at the end of the day a part of the lives of those who pursue them. Therefore the farmer has a disposition that is more or less different, and his play choices will ordinarily be different.

4. Various occupations limit play in one way and another because their pursuit determines what is available. So the fourth condition is *available means*. The city offers numerous artificial modes of recreation to those who can afford them. The opportunities are more abundant on the mental and emotional than on the physical side, due to environmental restrictions. The types of play are, however, wide in range and rich in content. The country is poor in artificial means by virtue of the sparsity of population, limitations of wealth, and lack of talent, but rich in natural means. There is every chance for outdoor recreation. Possibly we can say that the country and the city are each deficient in what the other has the most of. If the farmer's normal play needs to be on the psychic plane, it is clear that his environment does not supply adequate opportunity.

These restrictions in range of opportunity make for diverse play interests as between city and country. For instance, the Boy Scout program does not appeal to the country as to the city boy, for "the farm boy is saturated with out-of-doors, already saturated with the fields, with the woods, the streams, the open sky, the great spaces, the open road, and nature as a whole; while the city boy is a dry sponge ready to soak it all up, and, moreover, the Scout program is invented for and fitted for the dry sponge alone."²

Further, it should be borne in mind that agriculture is seasonal

² C. J. Galpin, *Rural Boys and the Boy Scouts*. Address at the annual meeting of Scout Executives, 1924, pamphlet of United States Department of Agriculture.

in its nature. The months that afford the greatest possibilities for play are consumed by work and those that afford the least play opportunity out-of-doors bring the most leisure for it. The reverse prevails in many urban occupations.

5. What play opportunities are available depends not only upon the natural environment, but quite as much upon social tradition and organization. Therefore a fifth condition is *custom*, shaped by moral and religious belief as well as by occupational habits and racial experiences. Numerous racial, national, class, and institutional groups, each having its play customs, give rise to much variety in both urban and rural society. In the rural area there is, however, more variety than in the urban. This is to be explained by the greater tendency of city conditions to determine uniformity in certain ranges of custom.

The Function of Play

The service of play to human society can scarcely be overestimated. So important is its function that it would be hard to apportion the contributions made to civilization between work and play with any degree of fairness. We can best emphasize its function by viewing it under three heads—physical, psychological, and sociological:

1. Play is indispensable to a full development of the body. As the normal way of expending surplus energy, it stimulates the emotions, and ordinarily brings the whole physical being into action, with the result that there is higher energizing, quickened functions, and the establishment of better and fuller coördination. Not so work, which canalizes activities and confines exercise to particular parts of the body until sooner or later the body often cries out against this unfair treatment and the emotions are depressed. When that happens, play, "the positive side of the health program," becomes the means of restoration.

2. Psychologically, play quickens thinking, makes alert, and gives resourcefulness as nothing else does. John Dewey says it is required to "introduce variety, flexibility, and sensitiveness into disposition."

Among those who do not habitually play, dullness of mind, feeble imagination, touchy dispositions, warped judgment, and strong aversions to new ideas are to be observed. It is generally recognized that the most playful are the most educable. Play, releasing the emotions, removes discouragements, mental restraints, and inner irritations. There is positive gain in freedom. Unless provision is made for this emotional experience, mental disorders are invited. Herbert Spencer called play a safety valve. To the tired mind it brings refreshment, as sleep to the body. Play that brings exercise to the body of the mentally tired gives relief from nervous tension.

There is a psychological necessity for emotional release. Some sort of indulgence is indispensable and will be secured in one way or another. There is no better way than thru wholesome play. In the absence of it there will arise perverted and demoralizing practices. "Games," says Gillin, "produce the emotional equivalent of ancient gladiatorial combats, mediaeval pageants and tournaments; of modern political barbecues, religious revivals, primitive social orgies, alcoholic 'sprees,' and religious persecutions."³

There is unquestionably a need for more play as a foil to vicious means of emotional expression that tend to flourish where life is most monotonous, dull, and joyless. It is in such communities that lynchings, Ku Klux Klan depredations, wild religious revivalism, and alcoholic "sprees" occur. Genuine play would give a wholesome means of outlet and emotional satisfaction to people who in its absence resort to the practices mentioned.

Country people, like all others, must have play to develop normal and wholesome minds.

3. Sociologically, play is of the highest importance, above all as a *promoter of association per se*. Under no other circumstances do people associate so easily as in play. It submerges class, race, and religious differences, allays or destroys hatreds and animosities, and promotes positive social sympathies. Instances might be cited where rural neighborhoods split asunder by class jealousies and antagonistic efforts have been maneuvered by impartial leaders into playing together until feuds have been laid aside and forgotten.

³ J. L. Gillin, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 19, p. 830.

Again, it *fosters coöperation and social discipline*. The Duke of Wellington when visiting Eton is said to have looked upon the playground and remarked, "Here was won the battle of Waterloo." In other words, Englishmen had learned how to pull together in play on those grounds and had carried the ability with them into the nation's affairs. From childhood up the individual must learn to adjust his actions to those of others. There is nothing like play to train him in this.

A New England town had* tried again and again without success to form a coöperative marketing association. Finally, after the project had been dropped, a singing school was organized and met regularly for a sing and a good time. Thru it the participants learned the art of association and soon were able to unite in a co-operative enterprise for business purposes.

No training is equal to play for social discipline. All games have their rules to which players must conform. There must be loyalty to leaders, fairness to fellows, readiness to accept defeat gracefully and success modestly. External coercion being lacking, habits are formed spontaneously and effectively. Good sportsmanship is as necessary in the social system as good workmanship. No training is equal to play for this discipline. Denied play opportunities, the individual is likely to become a dangerous member of society, menacing its higher standards and corrupting its nobler life. Another *result* of play on the social side is the development of community solidarity. Thru games togetherness grows up in neighborhoods. A "we" feeling emerges. This is especially true where there are teams playing with other communities. As one has said: "But once interest children in play, get them to organize teams, design and make a school banner, compose and learn a school cheer, adopt a distinctive athletic custom or even a celluloid button which is to be worn when they go to the next great play festival and compete with other schools, and there will be no lack of community spirit so far as the children are concerned, and the adult population will soon be catching something of it too." 4

* Myron T. Scudder, "The Rural School as a Social Center," *The Playground*, Vol. V, No. 6, p. 202.

Periods of Development and Rural Play

As one stage of development has succeeded another in rural America, the conditions determining play have undergone alteration. Therefore the type of play also has changed. If we trace this evolution it will enable us to understand better the present recreational habits and needs of country people.

1. *Play under pioneer conditions.* A self-sufficient agriculture, hoe-farming, excessive toil, extreme isolation and undeveloped institutions characterized the rural community of pioneer days. There was not much surplus energy among a people struggling hard for a living. Leisure was a luxury indeed for the pioneer man and his household. The chief recreation grew directly out of the necessary labors. It was home made. There was but little play for play's sake.

Many work undertakings called for mutual aid. Building cabins and barns, log-rolling in clearing the land, harvesting crops, making roads, and numerous other kinds of work brought neighbors together in "bees." The whole family frequently turned out on such occasions. When the barn or cabin was up, the corn husked, the quilting finished, the laborers joined in a celebration. This might be only a basket dinner, but often it was a dance or an impromptu merrymaking. It became the custom to end a "bee" in this fashion. People looked forward to the celebration as part of the program. It was the pay due one's neighbors for their kindly services. The "raising" was almost sure to end in a "hoe down." Even where religious sentiment disapproved of the dance, it was difficult to prevent such "frollicks" altogether. They were rude, boisterous affairs, but they satisfied the emotional needs as few things did.

Another means of pleasure was drink. Almost everybody drank and many did it to excess. Hard cider and rum flowed freely at all celebrations. What was offered to drink was one of the attractions at every "bee." It did not matter whether the "bee" was a corn husking or a church raising. Naturally a good deal of horse play and rowdyism went with the drinking.

Where men came together there was always rivalry in the exhibition of skill and individual prowess. They raced with scythes or

cradles in cutting hay and grain, with axes in chopping, and with teams in pulling. There were wrestling, lifting, and jumping contests. These were common ways of playing in every community.

Pioneer religion, with its camp meetings and revivals, also afforded a kind of recreation. These were often frenzied affairs in which people were carried away with fear and superstitious belief. Nevertheless these occasions furnished diversion and emotional outlet.

Hunting and fishing were common everywhere, sometimes giving rise to hunting parties, such as wolf and fox hunts, prairie-chicken "shoots," a bee-tree cutting, a pigeon-roost raid, or a fish-spearing party.

Altho similar primitive conditions led to similar means of recreation, there was local variation. New England suppressed pleasure as much as possible. It was singularly austere and joyless compared with other sections. The South encouraged it even to voluptuousness. The Middle West, where East and South met, was a region of divided attitudes. The Far West, as it opened up, became even more so.

The pioneers were as a rule characterized by emotional instability induced by the necessity of following many occupations incidental to the exigencies of a self-sufficient economy. This tended to induce extremes in all activities. Their play, their work, their religion were no half-hearted affairs. Limited tho it was in variety and amount, the pioneers indulged excessively, when at all, in such play as we have described.

2. The *Land-Farming Period*, with fully settled communities, well-established institutions, land mostly under cultivation, thriving villages, world markets opened up by railways, machinery being introduced on the farms, and a stable population, gave new conditions for play. There was somewhat more leisure, less extreme isolation, better means of travel, more comfortable living, and withal more cultural interests among farmers.

The recreations of the pioneers were supplemented by many new ones. There was not so much need of mutual aid; hence "bees" and the celebrations accompanying them were much less frequent.

Sheep-washings, sheep-shearings and threshings, with an occasional barn-raising, were the chief group activities. The church and the school tended to introduce more refined occasions for recreation. There came the "singing school," the "spelling school," "school exhibitions," now and then a "literary" or "debating society," the "donation party" for the minister, the "box social" and the picnic.

Villages promoted many new occasions for rural enjoyment—Fourth of July celebrations, "Old Settlers' Days," County Fairs, political party rallies and jollifications in campaign years, Memorial Day programs and the circus. They also supported lodges and pool halls. Farmers were drawn to town by these events and opportunities, but the weekly journey thither to trade and get the mail became a more significant custom of this period. Such trips became a means of recreation of some importance for the country people. At the village, neighbors and friends met and visited. Saturdays or Mondays, according to local custom, thus became a sort of holiday. In parts of the South the practice was associated with the monthly "Court Day." "Going to town" of Saturdays is still a regular holiday event for the country Negroes of the Gulf States. The practice must be classed as a distinctive form of recreation during this period. For many it was about the only diversion.

Visiting among friends and kinsfolk, especially of Sundays, also came into vogue at this time. Sunday visiting was taboo in New England and often frowned upon in religious communities of the Middle West.

One of the most distinctive pleasures that came to flourish at this time thruout the Middle West was the "play party." This was devoted to certain games which were much in favor with youth. The games were what is known as "ring games," with a song accompanying a kind of waltz or two step. The choosing of partners with a kissing formula was the rule. These games were evidently survivals of old English folk-songs and dances. Somehow they had been carried over from the Old World thru the pioneer times to blossom forth in the new era. They sprang up to meet a need where musicians, dancing-floors and other opportunities for play were limited. Any gathering could without forethought start such games

if someone knew the song and the formula or could improvise them. A few examples out of a great range of titles may be cited: "Four Brave Commanders," "Happy Is the Miller," "Weevilly Wheat," "I've Been to the East, I've Been to the West," "Needle's Eye," "Skip to My Lou," "Chase the Squirrel," "Down in Alabama," "Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley," "Old Dan Tucker," "Jim Along Jo," "I'll Be the Reaper," "Farmer in the Dell," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "Pig in the Parlor," "The Girl I Left Behind Me." There was the widest difference between localities and sections in the versions of the songs, for the verses were transmitted wholly by word of mouth. The game itself, however, was quite the same everywhere.

The common name given to the play party was the "kissing bee." In many places the older people joined in the games and had as much fun out of them as youth. Sometimes the osculatory formula was banned, and where religious influences were overstrong, often the party itself.

The play party with its "ring games" seems to have vanished as sophistication grew in the social life of the community. By the end of the period its day was pretty well past except in unusually isolated sections. In such localities echoes of it may still be heard.⁵

The latter part of the period saw the rise of the Grange, which emphasized the social and recreational side of life. Where it flourished, play was promoted thru its ritual and by entertainments, picnics, dinners, and fairs held under its auspices. Since it catered to the entire family, these were opportunities of no mean value.

3. The *Exploiter Period*, ushering in highly commercialized agriculture, land speculation, farm tenancy, the rural free delivery, the telephone, the rural exodus, and church and school decline, created another set of conditions influencing the mode of play.

Certain play activities of the former period began to recede into the background. The agricultural fair had generally gone down, school and church entertainments were less numerous, the play

⁵ For an interesting discussion of the play party, see articles in *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vols. 28, 33, Nos. 107, 128, by E. F. Piper and Emelyn E. Gardner.

party had died out, and holiday celebrations were less fostered by the towns. There were indications that play was less vital than hitherto. However, there were some new developments of a positive sort. The towns were unquestionably strengthening their appeal. New ties were being made by retiring farm families, by the rural delivery and the telephone, by high schools patronized in increasing degree by country boys and girls. There were more town dwelling clergymen ministering to country churches. The more wide-awake villages began to provide band concerts once a week during the summer. Lodges multiplied, Chautauquas came into vogue, the traveling theatrical troupe appeared, baseball was often organized, concert courses were provided for the winter, dancing clubs and many other attractions were offered by the villages. Thus a larger circle of farm people than before came to find entertainment at these centers. This was noticeable in some sections more than in others, especially in the Far West, perhaps. "Even in the days of the horse and buggy," says Yoder, "the farm families of Washington . . . early developed the habit of finding most of their recreation in the towns."⁶

In many open country communities, where not kept out by the church, Sunday baseball appeared. Farmers' picnics became organized events in numerous localities. The family reunion sprang up in the Middle West. This period saw the rise and decline of the bicycle, which in a limited way was a source of pleasure.

4. A *Fourth Period* came in the second decade of the century with the advent of the automobile. It overlapped the Exploiter Period by about a decade. It turned out to be an era of agricultural decline, rural readjustment and reorganization. The new developments influencing recreation have been summarized as follows: "(1) the breakdown of the social solidarity of old neighborhoods and communities; (2) new methods of transportation and communication, with the consequent more intensive contact with the city; (3) the expansion of commercialized forms of recreation, such as dance halls, roadhouses, and movies, in rural areas; (4) the increase of

⁶ F. R. Yoder, "Some Better Things in Farm Life in Washington," State College of Washington, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 195*, p. 12.

rural recreational activities; and (5) an increasing belief in the value of recreation."⁷

With the automobile came the use of motor power and new mechanical devices, the extension of good roads, the expansion of rural mail routes, telephone service, and, finally, the general introduction of motion pictures and the radio. Thru these agencies recreational possibilities for young and old alike were greatly increased.

The automobile itself was a recreative boon to country people, not only for pleasure riding, but also for opening up a wider world and for stimulating to more leisure time activity. It made it possible for the family to avail itself of whatever was within a drive of an hour or so. It made the town with its motion pictures and other commercialized agencies of entertainment wholly accessible. At the same time many new organizations fostering recreation appeared. These include the Farm Bureau, the Farm and Home Demonstration work, the Boys' and Girls' 4-H Clubs, Coöperative Associations, local Farmers' Clubs, the consolidated school, the high school, and various other agencies. The fact that so many have recreation programs is indicative of a growing appreciation of the value of play on the part of country people.

Generally speaking, the farmer has probably acquired more leisure and more free energy from the use of motor power devices. But has this resulted in more play? The use of the new facilities would have to be balanced against the loss or neglect of older ones, and the leisure checked by its manner of employment before the answer could be given.

Withal, this period is characterized by much catered amusement in contrast to the local self-sufficiency and recreational resourcefulness of the past. Country folk tend more and more to become spectators instead of participators. Thus it becomes possible to say: "Rural recreation is now largely inspired from without the community, not from within; from the city, not from the country. In the place of the free, spontaneous recreations of the country-

⁷ Bruce L. Melvin and Edna N. Smith, "Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects," *WPA Research Monograph XV*, 1938, p. 71.

side there are such commercialized amusements as professional athletes and the amusement park.”⁸

Since 1920, with the decline of many rural organizations outside the economic field, certain lines of entertainment and play have been neglected. Lodges and fraternal orders have lost vogue everywhere. Informal, non-commercial, and spontaneous forms of play have received more attention. In brief, when catered amusement and organized recreation could no longer be afforded, people returned to simpler forms, such as, hunting, fishing, visiting, games, dancing, music, dramatics, and types of activities that they themselves can readily devise.⁹

Apart from the influence of the automobile, motion-pictures, and the radio, and the programs of the new types of rural organizations, it is doubtful if the recreational pattern of the countryside has undergone much change in the last twenty-five years. Informal and spontaneous activities have always been the most important means of entertainment. Even rural dramatics are old. From time to time, the emphasis has shifted, but basically rural people continue to rely pretty much upon traditional ways of satisfying their play interests.

Rural Play Inventoried

No comprehensive survey of rural play activities has been made, but a number of studies in sample areas throw light on conditions. In the West, Rankin's survey of 1,141 Nebraska families in ten farm areas disclosed the fact that a sixth of the households played outdoor games of various kinds; about half attended athletic contests as spectators; two-thirds indulged in indoor games; one-third were gameless; six-sevenths attended fairs; four-fifths, picnics; three-fifths, parties and celebration; a fourth, dances; one-sixth, games; and nearly half, "movies." Rankin concluded that some of the recreational needs were being well met, but some not

⁸ W. C. Nason, Rural Planning, United States Department of Agriculture *Bulletin* No. 1388, p. 1.

⁹ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 266; Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 250-251.

at all.¹⁰ Peirce found in three Iowa townships that from a third to half the farm families frequently attended "movies"; from 2 to 40 per cent, Sunday baseball games; from a third to a majority, picnics; occasionally a family in one township to two-thirds in another went to church socials; and about a fourth attended dances in localities where they were not taboo. Neighborhood Sunday visiting was the chief recreation of four-fifths of all families.¹¹

Lively and Miller listed the leisure-time activities of 300 rural young people 16 to 24 years of age in nine Ohio townships in 1934. Table 67 gives the data.

Studies in Genesee and Tompkins Counties, New York, by Mildred B. Thurow and W. A. Anderson reveal the leisure-time activities of over 1,000 rural unmarried men and women 15 to 29 years of age.¹² The most frequent activities were indoor games and passive diversions, educational cultural interests, parties, hobbies, arts and crafts, household affairs, dramatics, and commercial amusements.

The three highest on the list for men in order of preference altho the majority pursued but one or two of them, were outdoor sports, indoor sports, and outings. Commercial amusements also were stressed. The young women put indoor passive interests first, and often second and third, altho household activities, outdoors sports, outings, commercial amusements, and parties held important places. A study by Anderson of the married people of the same age group in Tompkins County showed similar activities and interests.¹³

The preferences of these young men and women for recreational

¹⁰ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Tenancy," University of Nebraska, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 196*, pp. 32-43.

¹¹ P. S. Peirce, "Social Surveys of Three Rural Townships in Iowa," *University of Iowa Mimeographs*, Series 12, Vol. V, Pt. II, p. 83.

¹² Mildred B. Thurow, "Interests, Activities, and Problems of Rural Young Folk," Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 617*, Dec., 1934; W. A. Anderson, "Rural Youth: Interests, and Problems, II, Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age," Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 661*, Jan., 1937.

¹³ W. A. Anderson, "Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I, Married Young Men and Women 15 to 29 Years of Age," Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 649*, May, 1936.

activities was somewhat at variance with what they customarily did. This was especially true of the young women, who stressed the need of social organization to provide recreational opportunities. The men felt the need of more athletics and sports. All wanted wider contacts and recreational guidance.

From the rural New York studies the fact that village boys and girls have a richer play life becomes apparent; also that there is a difference in the quality of the play. The village youth choose

Table 67

LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF RURAL YOUNG PEOPLE, 16 TO 24
YEARS OF AGE IN NINE OHIO TOWNSHIPS ^a

Activity	IN SCHOOL						NOT IN SCHOOL			
	Total		Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent
Total Persons	300	100	94	100	85	100	77	100	44	100
Reading	254	85	81	86	82	96	55	71	36	82
Attending Shows	228	76	77	82	58	68	65	84	28	64
Auto Driving	206	69	70	74	46	54	62	81	28	64
Playing Cards	206	69	68	72	60	71	51	66	27	61
Attending Parties	201	67	69	73	76	89	27	35	29	66
Playing Basket Ball	192	64	54	57	66	78	40	52	27	61
Visiting	191	64	58	62	58	68	53	69	27	61
Listening to Radio	155	52	63	67	38	45	38	49	16	36
Attending Picnics	154	51	53	56	64	75	19	25	18	41
Swimming	150	50	73	78	13	15	57	74	7	16
Playing Baseball	146	49	43	46	44	52	47	61	12	27
Hunting	140	47	75	80	3	4	59	77	3	7
Playing Golf	134	45	61	65	36	42	27	35	10	23
Dancing	131	44	44	47	34	40	36	47	17	39
Fishing	124	41	56	60	27	32	31	40	10	23
Hiking	108	36	44	47	44	52	12	16	8	18
Attending Institutes	107	36	42	45	30	35	25	32	10	23
Singing	98	33	23	24	53	62	9	12	13	30
Playing Musical Inst.	97	32	26	28	41	48	14	18	16	36
Fancy Work	83	28	4	4	48	56	2	3	29	66
Playing Victrola	70	23	19	20	28	33	10	13	13	30
Skating	68	23	34	36	18	21	9	12	7	16
Attending Socials	66	22	22	23	29	34	8	10	7	16
Attending Football Games	63	21	32	34	10	12	17	22	4	9
Coasting	57	19	25	27	18	21	7	9	7	16

Table 67 (continued)

Activity					IN SCHOOL				NOT IN SCHOOL			
	Total		Males		Females		Males		Females			
	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent
Camping	54	18	26	28	17	20	5	6	6	14		
Attending Lectures and Concerts	51	17	21	22	20	24	6	8	4	9		
Amateur Dramatics	50	17	14	15	21	25	5	6	10	23		
Playing Croquet	45	15	16	17	20	24	4	5	5	11		
Playing Football	37	12	8	9	11	13	12	16	6	14		
Attending Fairs	29	10	11	12	6	7	8	10	4	9		
Playing Pool & Billiards	23	8	11	12	1	1	11	14	0	0		
Attending Basketball Games	20	7	9	10	2	2	7	9	2	5		
Attending Baseball Games	19	6	5	5	8	9	3	4	3	7		
Painting	14	5	3	3	9	11	1	1	1	2		
Playing Tennis	9	3	2	2	5	6	0	0	2	5		

^a C. E. Lively and L. J. Miller, "Rural Young People, 16 to 24 Years of Age—a Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships" *Mimeograph Bulletin No. 73*, Dept. of Rural Economics, Ohio State University and Ohio Agr. Exp. Station, July, 1934, p. 16.

more athletics and team play of all sorts. They also dance more.

The more recent studies seem to indicate a shift of play interest toward a greater quantity, a wider variety, and a more active type of play.

Available Opportunities for Satisfying Play Interests

Lively's studies of social agencies in Ohio included a number which provided play. In Table 68 their number and distribution are indicated. Anderson's study of rural youth in Tompkins County, New York, listed the places available for the leisure-time activities of those youth. In Table 69 these data are given.

Such tabulations do not, of course, tell the whole story. More detailed information would list several other facilities and give some idea of how much they are used by the farm families. Nevertheless, the data before us throw light on conditions.

How much use do rural people make of such available recreational facilities? One study of 1,014 farm families in various sections of North Carolina, made by Taylor and Zimmerman, revealed the amount of patronage given picnics, fairs, sociables, movies, holiday celebrations, Chautauquas, lectures, theaters, dances, and other similar forms of amusement and recreation.¹⁴ A computation was made of the per cent of families of which one or more members had participated in one or more events during the preceding year. It was found that 11.2 per cent had attended but one kind of event; 15.7 per cent, two; 22.3 per cent, three; 15.7 per cent, four; and 17.1 per cent, more than four. There remained 18 per

Table 68

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RURAL COMMUNITIES IN OHIO HAVING CERTAIN SOCIAL AGENCIES AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF EACH IN THE STATE ^a

Agency	Per Cent	Total Number
Number Trade Area Rural Communities—1272 ..	100	
Grange	69	878
Lodges	55	2,233
Pool Halls	42	955
Annual Chautauqua or Lyceum	33	627
Open Societies	26	...
Moving Picture Theater	23	312
Band	22	282
Orchestra	19	250
Public Dance Hall	19	383
Local Newspaper	16	238
Girl Scouts or Camp Fire Girls' Troop	13	138
Boy Scout Troop	12	163
Annual Homecoming	10	124
Parent-Teacher Association	9	145
Annual Picnic or Festival	9	120
Local Library	7	102
Farmers' Club or Community Club	7	94
Annual Corn, Fruit, or Dairy Show	6	22
Chorus or Singing Society	6	83
Community Fair	5	75

^a E. C. Lively, "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio," *Ohio State University Extension Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 46.

¹⁴ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers*, pp. 76-78.

cent of the total number of families from which no one had attended an event.

Table 69

PLACES OF THE LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF THE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ^a

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
	Men					
	Num- ber	Num- ber	Num- ber	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Home	165	93	49	40	23	12
Friends' home	4	4	1	1	1	0
Church	3	1	3	1	0	1
School	15	12	3	4	3	1
Community parks, centers, or playgrounds	46	23	7	12	6	2
Clubhouses	9	10	4	2	3	1
Vacant lots	22	7	1	6	2	0
Streets	2	8	1	0	2	0
Woods, streams	60	46	10	15	12	3
Commercial amusement places ..	31	53	17	8	13	4
Others	19	11	13	5	3	3
None	23	131	290	6	32	73
Total	399	399	399	100	100	100

	Women					
	Num- ber	Num- ber	Num- ber	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Home	227	95	68	62	27	19
Friends' home	11	15	5	3	4	1
Church	1	5	4	0	1	1
School	15	14	5	4	4	1
Community parks, centers, or playgrounds	17	10	2	5	3	1
Clubhouses	5	2	2	1	1	1
Vacant lots	2	4	2	1	1	1
Streets	1	3	1	0	1	0
Woods, streams	16	41	20	5	11	6
Commercial amusement places ..	34	50	24	10	14	7
Others	9	12	6	3	3	1
None	21	108	220	6	30	61
Total	359	359	359	100	100	100

^a W. A. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Clopper's study of rural child welfare in West Virginia disclosed conditions similar to those just described.¹⁵

Anderson found in the New York county that the home was the chief center for the leisure activities of young men and women. Other centers, such as schools and churches, were used only occasionally. Organizations were involved to some degree, but not extensively. The young men averaged membership in less than one, and the young women in slightly more than one. However, 56 per cent of the young men, and 46 per cent of the young women did not hold membership in any formal organization. These people had an average of three hours daily for leisure activities. The evening was the most available period.¹⁶

In a study of the recreational facilities provided by consolidated rural schools in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, Hayes found athletic fields with more or less equipment for football, baseball,

Table 70

PER CENT OF SCHOOLS WHERE VARIOUS EVENTS WERE HELD
DURING THE YEAR ^a

Events	Per Cent of Schools in La.	Per Cent of Schools in Miss.	Per Cent of Schools in Ala.
Fairs	10.3	22.5	23.5
Community Dances	17.2	2.5	10.9
Athletic Games	39.7	40.	41.3
Picnics, Box Suppers, Barbecues and Banquets	22.4	35.	45.6
School Plays and Entertainments .	24.1	12.5	32.6
Boy Scouts	3.4
Pageants	1.7
Literary Society	32.7	37.5	34.7
Moving Pictures	5.1
Lyceum Courses	13.7	7.5	...
Singing, Public Lectures'	12.5	2.2
Boys' and Girls' Clubs	27.6	37.5	50

^a A. W. Hayes, "Community Value of the Consolidated Rural School," Tulane University, *Research Bulletin No. 2*, pp. 33, 37, 38.

¹⁵ E. N. Clopper, *Rural Child Welfare*, pp. 40, 41, 131.

¹⁶ Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 36.

tennis, and basketball in 43.1 per cent of such schools in Louisiana; 45 per cent in Mississippi; and 56.5 per cent in Alabama. The preceding table indicates the recreational uses made of these schools thruout the year.

His opinion was that the "consolidated rural schools are rapidly becoming leading forces . . . for stimulating community fairs, boys' and girls' clubs, community pageants, picnics and feats, athletic contests and similar events."¹⁷

Abel's study of 260 consolidated schools in all parts of the United States disclosed auditoriums in 185 of the buildings, and gymnasiums in approximately 40 per cent of the total number. About one-third had athletics, but only 19 had moving pictures.¹⁸

The data before us probably reflect fairly typical play conditions in rural districts thruout the United States.

Shortcomings and Needs in Rural Recreation

1. The average farm family and community suffer relative play poverty. Principally because of a lack of play philosophy or a disbelief in the value of play, which is an old and persistent attitude of farmers, even when there is leisure, it is not always utilized in positive play, but is spent in either play of a negative character or in idleness.

Farm folk are inclined to hold play unnecessary when there is plenty of work, and by common consent children are made to labor to keep them from becoming shiftless. As a West Virginia farmer put it, "My boy plays with a grubbing hoe, grubbing sprouts and briars. In wet weather he cuts wood. That's the kind of play that's good for him."

Hamlin Garland says of his father: "His own boyhood had been task filled, and he saw nothing unnatural in the regular employment of his children. Having had little play himself, he considered that we were having a very comfortable boyhood."

Traditionally frowned upon for children, play is even more dis-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁸ J. F. Abel, "A Study of 260 School Consolidations," Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, *Bulletin No. 32*, 1924.

countenanced for the grown. Happily there are signs in many if not all sections of the country that the negative attitude is passing. Numerous agencies are carrying the gospel of play to the rural people. And, as we have already observed, the motor vehicle and other new forces are helping to make the country more sympathetic to recreation.

2. A lack of team play is the second deficiency in rural recreation. We have called attention to the social nature and value of play. Normally, both children and adults prefer team games, but in the country opportunities for such activities are limited by the lack of numbers, developed playgrounds, and competent leadership. The result has been the prevalence of individualized games. Team play of a kind was found in the "bees" of earlier days; with their passing, conditions were worsened and have only recently taken a turn for the better.

The advancement of rural life thru organized self-help depends largely upon the farmer's capacity for coöperative effort. Traditionally his deficiency in this is well-known. Altho of late significant gains have been made, a more adequate training would do much to further its development. "The non-social individualism that makes the adult farmer so often unable to coöperate, the petty self-will of the quarreling village community, the brooding over minor wrongs and insults, the social suspicion and jealousy, the frequent inferiority complex of country men—all have their main origins in childhood that developed without the adequate discipline of spontaneous group life."¹⁹ The easiest way to secure this is thru organized team games, in the absence of which both the spirit of team work and the capacity for carrying it on are weak.

Hopeful developments are appearing, however, in connection with consolidated schools. Studies of high school students in Georgia and Illinois show that an average of less than 10 per cent prefer to spend their leisure time alone. Most of them want group activities.²⁰ This is true of those from rural areas as well as those from

¹⁹ H. P. Douglass, *How Shall Country Youth Be Served?* p. 181.

²⁰ H. H. Punke, "Leisure-Time Attitudes and Activities of High-School Students," *School and Society*, June 27, 1936.

towns. The influence of training in group activities in the schools is thus becoming manifest. Altho organized play is slowly growing, not until it is made a part of the regular curriculum in every school, will it get far. Obviously the school is the institution that should provide this training. In the *first* place, the school age is the time for physical development as well as mental, and one is quite as important as the other. *Moreover*, systematic play is needed to relieve the strain of the class room and should be provided to give balanced development. In the *third* place, the activities which children under pioneer conditions enjoyed are for the most part no longer possible. Unless the school provides a substitute in a regular play program, many will grow up without any equivalent experience. The years of education thru activities will be void of the needed training. *Again*, with the decreasing size of the family, sufficiently large play groups outside the consolidated school group are not likely to be assembled for play. Hence the school is the time and the place for play education. In the *fifth* place, competitive games create school loyalty as does nothing else, and if play is to be carried on apart from the school, divided loyalty is bound to weaken the school interest. *Finally*, the school can provide play education at less expense than the community can secure it otherwise. As part of the curriculum it can be directed and supervised more easily and effectively. The management of the playgrounds is easier under school authority, for the children have a greater sense of responsibility in school than out.²¹

To provide adequate play education the school day would have to be extended for an hour or so or the class room work would have to be somewhat curtailed. But to lengthen the day would seem to be the wise thing. Again, a trained play director or teacher would have to be provided for the school staff. The principal for extra pay, if properly educated for it, might well take on this function. Above all, local school boards will have to be persuaded of the value of play in education before so great an innovation can be introduced.

3. A third shortcoming in the recreative activities of country

²¹ H. S. Curtis, *Education Through Play*, pp. 181-185.

people may be paradoxically described as inactivity. There is too much just sitting, visiting, feasting, looking, riding, or listening. There is lack of positive activity and participation in real play. This, to be sure, is one of the growing habits of our entire civilization, but that does not alter its significance or lessen its consequences for country people. The traditional toilsomeness and isolation of agriculture are doubtless partially responsible, but the lack of true play habits and the knowledge of how to play or what to play is chiefly to blame.

Until partially checked by the depression, the drift was definitely in the direction of catered, commercialized, and passive recreation rather than toward the more desirable opposite type. There was increased mobility, but that should not be mistaken for increased activity in the recreation chosen. Amusement was more sought after than true play.

Improving Rural Recreation

It is one thing to show the inadequacy of rural recreation, but quite another to offer a program of reform. All depends upon what forces are available and what measures are feasible. Some of these have already been suggested.

Among adults, the Grange, the Farmers' Association, the Farmers' Union, the Parent-Teacher Association, the Farmers' Club, the Farm Women's Club, the Farm Bureau, the Agricultural Extension Service and local Coöperative Associations are fostering more or less recreation in conjunction with other activities. Often it is only an incidental feature of the organization's program, but in other cases, as for instance with the Farm and Home Bureau in many places, and with the Grange, generally, it is a regular item. The Agricultural Extension Service also has adopted recreation as part of its regular program. Among other projects it has sponsored Homemakers' Camps for farm women in connection with the agricultural colleges in several states. In general, the Service promotes dramatics, song fests, dancing, family games, community pageants, and other recreative activities. In some instances, as in North Carolina, it has developed state-wide projects, involving the erection

of many clubhouses which sponsor recreation programs. With W.P.A. assistance around 200 have been built in the state since 1935.²²

In addition to the agencies working mainly with older adults, there are a number of national organizations that touch rural life and make some contribution to recreational activities among younger adults and juveniles. The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., the Boy and Girl Scout Movement, and the Junior Red Cross are reaching limited areas. The United States Public Health Service, the Federal Children's Bureau, the National Recreation Association, and the 4-H Club work of the Agricultural Extension Service are all furthering play. The last two have joined to provide training for volunteer play leaders.

Some rural institutions also are actively promoting play. We have already referred to the consolidated schools and their influence in this direction. Educational institutions everywhere are awakening to the importance of play and the impulse is affecting country schools of every class. Less can be said of the church. With rare exceptions, it normally hinders the promotion of better play or any at all, apart from events held for money-raising purposes.

Thus, with the exception of economic resources, the means of realizing a better recreational life are becoming available simultaneously with the awakening of educational interests.

Tangible means of improving recreation upon which these various forces may well focus, are rural parks, playgrounds and community buildings. The goals were visualized by Dr. L. H. Bailey in the following: "Every community should have a permanent place set aside for recreational enterprises. This should be primarily a grove; and I suggest that if there is no grove in a community that is adaptable to such purposes, an area be planted definitely with this end in view. This grove should be provided with seats, picnic tables, and a speaking-stand. Somewhere in connection with it there should be a building, preferably one that would serve as a community hall. There should also be a regular playground, to be

²² Ola P. Malcolm, "Home Demonstration Moves Forward," *Extension Service Circular No. 303*, March, 1939.

as consciously set aside for play and for games as a town-hall is set aside for public business or a fair ground is set aside for fairs. . . .

"The time is coming when we must have in each large rural community an expert in recreation as we now have an expert in teaching, an expert in ministering, and as we shall soon have local experts in various phases of farming. These experts will organize what will be essentially experiment stations in social practice and social justice. They will introduce not only games and play, but also redirect the music, the drama, and many other public expressions in the open country."²³

Playgrounds and community buildings are probably within reach of most rural communities. Many have been built since 1910.²⁴ The W.P.A. has given a great impetus to the movement in a third of the states. Elsewhere, the interest has been fairly general.²⁵ Several bulletins on types of community buildings, and how to plan and secure them have been issued.²⁶ Such buildings are used for a variety of purposes besides recreation. But the latter is an important feature. The range of play activities runs as follows: entertainments, motion pictures, musicales, community sings, dances, local plays, table games, debates, spelling bees, annual celebrations, basketball, volley ball, billiards, indoor baseball, swimming and other gymnastic activities. Some buildings have playgrounds.

The Red River Farmers' Club Hall of Kittson County, Minnesota, may be cited as an instance of a modest effort. In this open country neighborhood was erected in 1917 a simple structure by voluntary subscriptions, donated labor, and funds raised at socials. The cost was only \$2,500. This hall has become a real recreation center. Dramatics, picnics, games and other play activities are carried on there.²⁷

²³ L. H. Bailey, "The Playground in Rural Communities," *The Playground*, Vol. V, No. 6.

²⁴ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1274*, p. 2.

²⁵ Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, Columbia University Press, 1937.

²⁶ The latest of these is "Community Buildings for Farm Families," United States Department of Agriculture, *Farmer's Bulletin No. 1804*, Sept., 1938, by Blanche Halbert.

²⁷ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1274*, pp. 15-16.

Community parks and playgrounds, where the building is of secondary importance, also are being developed in a few places. In 1930 the National Recreation Association reported 73 communities of less than 2,500 that had provided public recreation grounds. A government bulletin describes one that will illustrate what can easily be done by an average community. Near Niagara, North Dakota, an open country neighborhood has provided itself with a park and playground known as "Bachelor Grove Community Park." It consists of eleven acres with pavilion, kitchen and refreshment parlor, baseball ground, wells, lighting system and many other improvements. The total cost was \$16,000 in money and labor. The money was raised by each family buying a share in the association. Here ball games, dances, picnics and other events are weekly occurrences in summer.²⁸

The play movement is reaching the small town more than the open country thru interested agencies. Some years ago the Harmon Foundation appropriated money for the purchase of playgrounds. It offered to furnish ten per cent of the cost of site up to certain limits. It required the grounds to be permanently dedicated to recreational use under control of the town council or board of education. The grounds were to be known as "Harmon Fields."

The recreation leader has appeared, not to be sure, quite as Dr. Bailey suggested, but in the persons of the county Agricultural Club and Home Demonstration agents, the 4-H Club leaders, and local volunteer workers. In at least two or three states legal provision is made for play directors. In New York it is permissible for school districts to have them, the state providing half the salary up to \$600. In Pennsylvania county and township supervisors are authorized to create a recreation board and provide funds for its use. Chester County was the first to set up such a board.²⁹ Thus a beginning has been made in raising up experts in play for the rural community, but the ideal is far from being realized.

In Denmark, and in Germany under the second Reich, an offi-

²⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1388*, "Rural Planning," pp. 2-3.

²⁹ *Progress Report*, Chapter IX, Albany, Sept., 1934.

cial called "Spiel Inspector" directed play in the country villages. If, thru the Extension Service or otherwise, all rural America could be provided with such leadership, it would prove a boon to rural society. The ideal might be an official who, like the county superintendent of schools, would circulate among the schools of an area to teach and organize play. Here is a fruitful field of experimentation for some philanthropist. If a subsidized director of recreation could once demonstrate the value and practicability of the scheme, it might open the way to a wider public interest in a support of play leaders.

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Topics for Discussion

1. From the tables in this chapter or from other sources note five kinds of leisure-time activities most preferred by farm youth and explain in each case why the preference.
2. Account for whatever differences there are in leisure-time activity between farm and village youth.
3. In rural communities with which you are familiar which of the following seem to hinder play activities the most, want of leadership, lack of facilities, opposing forces, indifference, or insufficient leisure?
4. Which is better for a rural community to depend upon, spontaneous leisure-time and play activities or programs of formally organized agencies?
5. What single agency or institution in the rural community with which you are most familiar is doing most to promote leisure-time activities? What are the main items in its program and do they appear to meet the needs or not?
6. To what extent are the leisure-time activities of your community being influenced by urban ideas and practices?

RURAL SANITATION AND HEALTH

The Chances of Death in Rural Society

“THE great problem of life—its labors and its affections—centers for most of us in the chances of death,” says Karl Pearson. For rural people in general, however, the great problem appears to be less centered in the chances of death than it is for urban dwellers. From 1900 until about 1920 the crude death rate in the original registration area of the United States averaged less in rural than in urban territory; then it rose slightly above the urban.¹ However, crude rates mean little. Mortality statistics do not properly distinguish rural from urban, since all aggregates under 10,000 are called rural. Nor do they take into account the differences between rural and urban populations in age, sex, and racial composition.

Adjusted rates are, therefore, more revealing. They show rural mortality rates to be well under urban. Thus, on the basis of the same age distribution, the rural rate was 13 and the urban 20.2 in 1910.

A far more accurate method of comparing rural and urban mortality is by the use of life expectation tables. Thus Thompson and Whelpton in comparing 14 large cities and 11 rural states found the expectation of life in 1919-20 to be 53.3 years in the former and 58.6 years in the latter. They concluded the more rural and agricultural the area is, the longer the expectation of life.² In 1930 the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's estimates of the life expectancy for the white population was: rural males, 62.09 years; females, 65.09; urban males, 56.73; females, 61.05.

¹ Walter F. Wilcox, *Introduction to the Vital Statistics of the United States: 1900-1930*, Washington, 1933, p. 25.

² W. S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States*, McGraw-Hill, 1933, pp. 241-242.

Thus it appears that a white male child born in the country today may expect to live some 5 years longer than one born in the city, and a white female child about 4 years longer. Altho in the generation since 1900 the mortality rate of cities has fallen more rapidly than that of the country, rural males subject to the conditions of a generation ago, had a longer life expectancy at all ages above 1 year than have urban males today. This simply means that in the last generation the urban population has advanced to the life expectancy level of the country a generation ago.³

It is apparently in the control of germ diseases that the city has advanced over the country while it has lost ground compared with the country with respect to degenerative diseases. Hence for the most important causes of death the rural rate is lower than the urban.⁴

If, therefore, the death rate may be taken as the measure of civilization, it would seem, on the face of things, that rural society has attained a higher level of civilization than has urban society.

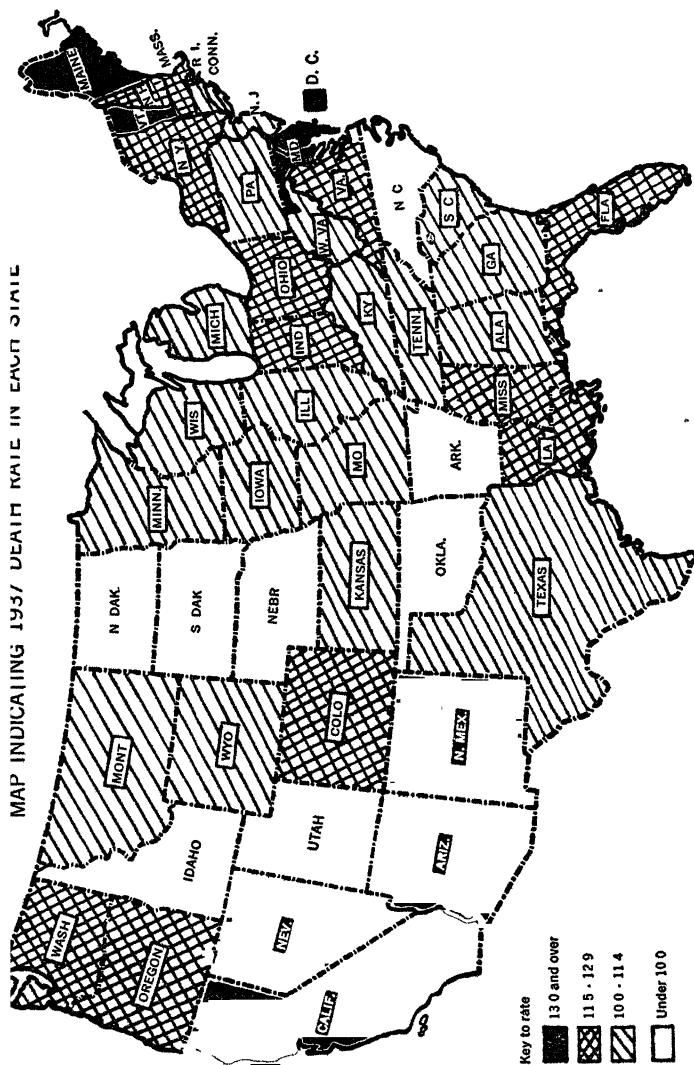
However, when considered in the light of other facts, such a conclusion is quite unwarranted. The chances of escaping death are on the average better in the country wholly thru *natural advantages*, not by virtue of a *higher level of civilization*. But even natural advantages are not present everywhere; hence the death rate is not uniformly lower in rural than in urban areas, as a glance at Figure 78 will show. There are favorable and unfavorable rural sections.

On the whole, however, natural advantages generally outweigh natural disadvantages and give the rural community a favorable status. For this it obviously deserves no credit, since its position is not due to social effort. In fact, it has made but little effort to improve its natural advantages. The city, in contrast, has exerted itself to overcome the disadvantages of its artificial life and has put the country to shame. Thus, insofar as health and sanitation are concerned, urban civilization is manifestly superior to anything the

³ Harold F. Dorn, "The Relative Amount of Ill-Health in Rural and Urban Communities," *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 53, July, 1938.

⁴ Thompson and Whelpton, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-257.

MAP INDICATING 1937 DEATH RATE IN EACH STATE



78. Showing Death Rate by States for 1937

Source: *Vital Statistics, Special Reports*, Bureau of the Census, Dec. 30, 1938.

country affords. For civilization must really be measured in terms of disadvantages overcome rather than of natural advantages enjoyed.

Neglected Rural Sanitation

Altho the truth is dawning that disease and death lurk primarily in our fellows and not in the physical environment, the fact cannot be ignored that it is quite as important to keep our physical surroundings wholesome, as it is to keep our neighbors free from disease. This is especially true of the country, for the countryman can perhaps avoid his sick neighbor, but he may not with such certainty avoid the flies, fleas, and mosquitoes that have visited his sick neighbor, nor the soil and the water that have been polluted by him. So while the countryman may escape the Scylla of exposure to sick people, he does it only to run more often into the Charybdis of a disease-infected environment, because of the common neglect of the latter in rural districts.

The most serious neglect pertains to the elimination of disease-causing and -carrying insects from which the country suffers. There is one variety of mosquito, the *culex quinque fasciatus*, which causes dengue or "break-bone fever." This mosquito is tropicopolitan in range and is responsible for extensive epidemics in the warmer parts of the United States. One such epidemic, for instance, raged thruout the Gulf States in the autumn of 1922. Altho dengue fever is rarely fatal, it causes intense suffering, contributes to the inefficiency of its victims, and perhaps to more or less permanent physical impairment. It can be eliminated only as this very common mosquito is destroyed.

Another variety of mosquito, the *anapheline*, is the chief carrier of malaria. There are upwards of 80,000,000 people in the malarious regions of the United States. From the rural districts of the South, where the incidence of the disease is highest, it shades off to relatively little in the North. In recent years, Mississippi, for instance, has reported about 80 cases of malaria per 1,000 of population. Probably there are at least 1,000,000 cases annually in the

country;⁵ some put it at 9,000,000 cases. Figure 79 shows the malaria area. It will also be seen from the map that many deaths occur. Data from the sections where the disease is most prevalent show mean death rates over a period of years ranging as high as 9 to 12 per 10,000 population.⁶

Like dengue fever, malaria can be eliminated by destroying the mosquito breeding places. Moreover, it can be controlled, if not eliminated, by the proper screening of houses.

Mention may be made in passing of the *Dermacentor* or spotted fever tick, another insect responsible for disease and death in the rural environment. When first identified, it was believed to be limited to the Northwest Rocky Mountain region, but in 1930 it was found along the Atlantic seaboard. It is now found in all geographic regions. It is harbored by various wild mammals and domestic animals, especially cattle. Its human host is reached from contact not only with animals, but also with underbrush. Before a prophylactic vaccine was developed, the mortality rate reached as high as 85 to 90 per cent.⁷

Everywhere rural districts are infested by flies. They flourish because of poor sanitary arrangements about farmsteads, especially where barnyard manure, on which they breed, is not properly cared for. Flies are great disease carriers, especially if human excreta are accessible to them, as is often the case, since adequate provisions for the disposal of such are frequently wanting. Hence typhoid fever, infantile diarrhea, and dysentery are prevalent in country districts. The seasonal incidence of these diseases corresponds to a considerable extent with fly prevalence in regions where filth disposal is neglected. Their rate of prevalence is always a good index to the sanitation of a community.

Some definite idea of how widespread and serious insanitary conditions are may be gained by reference to the findings of a survey of rural sanitation made in 1918 by the United States Public

⁵ Thomas Brues, *Insects and Human Welfare*, p. 9.

⁶ K. L. Maxcy, Reprint No. 815, from the *Public Health Reports*, pp. 233-250, Feb. 9, 1923.

⁷ Brock C. Hampton and Harry G. Eubank, "Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever," *Public Health Reports* Vol. 53, 1938, pp. 984-990.

Table 71

RURAL DEATHS FROM TYPHOID AND PARATYPHOID, PELLAGRA, AND
MALARIA, IN SEVEN SOUTHEASTERN COTTON STATES AND IN
OTHER STATES IN THE REGISTRATION AREA OF
THE UNITED STATES, 1930 ^a

State	1930 Rural Pop- ulation	TYPHOID AND PARATYPHOID		PELLAGRA		MALARIA	
		Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Deaths	Rate per 100,000
Seven cotton States .	12,404,000	1,578	12.9	3,126	25.2	2,050	16.5
Alabama	1,904,800	152	8.0	445	23.4	267	14.0
Arkansas	1,472,400	283	19.2	312	21.2	567	38.5
Georgia	2,241,000	424	18.9	514	22.9	406	18.1
Louisiana	1,271,000	157	12.4	121	9.5	131	10.3
Mississippi	1,776,400	220	12.4	473	26.6	312	17.6
North Carolina	2,369,600	123	5.2	739	31.2	42	1.8
South Carolina	1,368,800	239	17.5	522	38.1	325	23.7
Other States in the registration area	48,160,600	2,415	5.0	1,325	2.8	939	1.9

Source. *Mortality Statistics 1930*, U. S. Bureau of the Census, Tables Ia and 6.

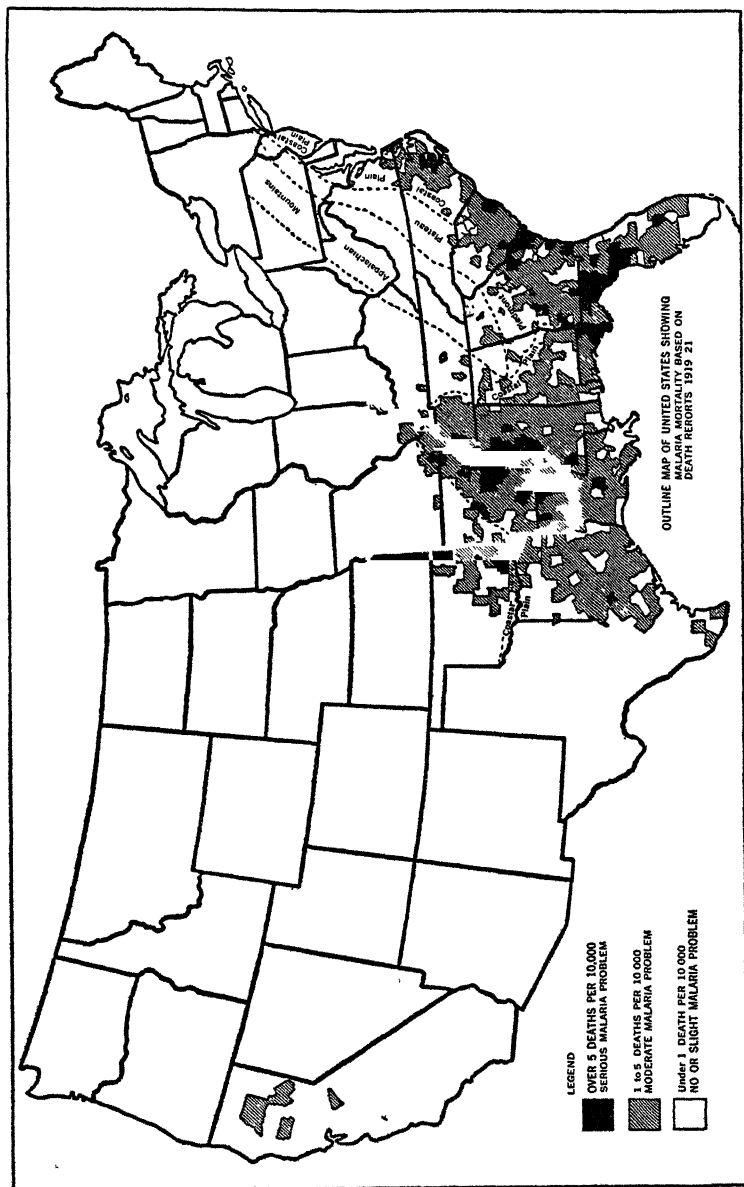
^a T. J. Wooster, Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," *W. P. A. Research Monograph V*, 1936, p. 230.

Health Service. A study of the conditions in fifteen typical rural counties of 13 Midwestern, Eastern, and Southern States brought out the following facts as summarized by L. L. Lumsden, surgeon of the Service:

Of 51,544 farm homes surveyed, only 1.22 per cent were equipped for the sanitary disposal of human excreta and at some which were properly equipped, the equipment was not used by all members of the household in a satisfactory manner; at 68 per cent, the water supply used for drinking and culinary purposes was obviously exposed to potentially dangerous contamination from privy contents or from promiscuous deposits of human excreta and at the majority of them the water supply was exposed also to unwholesome pollution from stable yards and pigsties. At only 32.88 per cent of the farm homes were the dwellings during the summer season effectively screened to prevent flies—having free access to nearby deposits of human or other filth—from entering the dining-rooms and kitchens and contaminating the foods for human consumption exposed therein.⁸

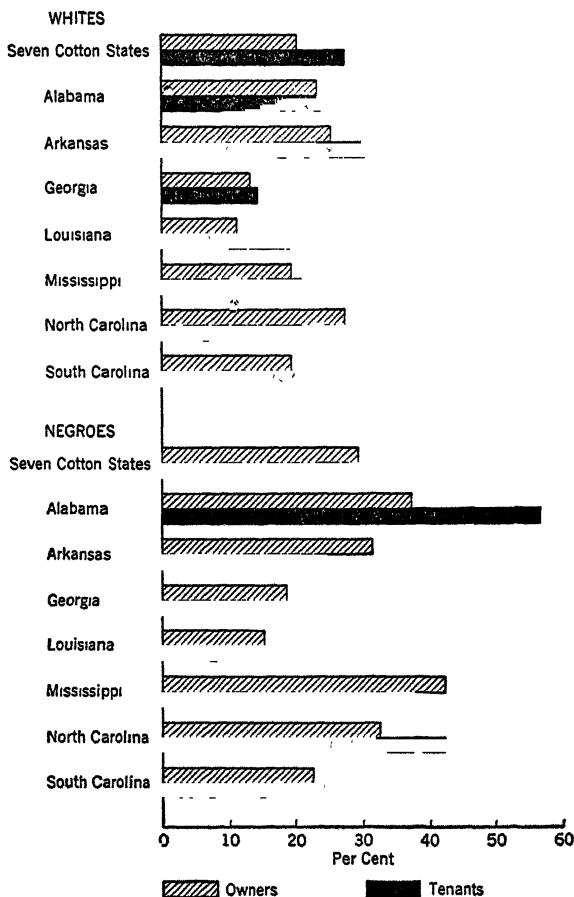
Since this study was made, there has been improvement in many areas, but the findings still hold true for a considerable part of

⁸ L. L. Lumsden, "Rural Sanitation," *Public Health Bulletin No. 94*, p. 40.



79. Distribution of Malaria in the United States

Source: Kenneth L. Maxcy's "Distribution of Malaria in the United States as Indicated by Mortality Reports," Reprint No. 839, *Public Health Reports*, May 25, 1923.



80. Percentage of Farm Houses in Southeastern Cotton States without Sanitary Facilities, 1934

Source: T. J. Woofert, Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," *W.P.A. Research Monograph V*, 1936, p. 99.

rural America, as subsequent surveys continue to reveal.⁹ For instance, it will be seen from Figure 80 that in 1934 about $\frac{1}{4}$ of all

⁹ See J. O. Dean and Kay Pearson, "Rural Sanitation by Emergency Relief Workers," *Public Health Reports Vol. 52*, Part I, 1937, pp. 629-636; see also *Farm Housing Survey* by Bureau of Home Economics U.S.D.A. in cooperation with Civil Works Administration.

the houses of white farmers and about $\frac{1}{3}$ of those of Negroes in the Eastern Cotton states lacked all sanitary facilities.

Altho typhoid, dysentery and diarrhea are the chief menace from insanitary conditions insofar as the fly is concerned, it does not end there; for the fly is known to transmit at least eighteen different kinds of disease germs. In addition to those mentioned, it carries the germs of scarlet fever, tuberculosis, cholera, tetanus, eye contagions, anthrax, glanders, infantile paralysis, meningitis, erysipelas, and several others.

Insanitary conditions are responsible for the hookworm disease also. Like malaria, it is almost wholly rural in origin. Some 20,000,000 people live in the infected areas of the South. Surveys in counties of Georgia, the Carolinas and Mississippi have revealed from 15.5 to 94.8 per cent of infection in the population 6 to 18 years of age.¹⁰ There are probably at least 2,000,000 cases of it annually. It lowers the vitality of its victims till they fall easy prey to other diseases, such as tuberculosis. Soil pollution from human excreta is the important factor in the spread of hookworm infection. It is preventable if proper sanitation is maintained.

Neglected Rural Sanitation an Urban Menace

Insanitary rural conditions affect not only country dwellers but urban people as well. To an increasing degree our urban communities are keeping themselves clean and by the most effective sanitary measures are seeking to protect themselves from health menaces within. But without, in far distant farmsteads, there lurk dangers against which the city gates are often unable to prevail. For flies and mosquitoes, milk, water, vegetables, fruits, and persons from insanitary areas are likely to pass the city portals daily. Any of these may be vehicles of infection. It is not, therefore, very far-fetched to say that probably the rate of urban morbidity and death would be even lower than it is, if rural sanitation were not so bad.

Not infrequently outbreaks of typhoid fever in urban districts

¹⁰ J. A. Ferrell, Director for the United States International Health Board, "The Trend of Preventive Medicine in the United States," p. 24. Reprint from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Sept. 20, 1923, Vol. 81.

are traced directly to contaminated milk or water supplied from the country. It is not so easy to trace epidemics of this sort to contaminated fruits and vegetables, but vegetables that have been grown in soil polluted by human waste are common disseminators of such diseases. The Survey of Rural Sanitation in fifteen counties brought to light that milk, fruit, vegetables and other foods were being sold to urban communities from farmsteads in the counties where from 11 to 69 per cent of the homes had no toilets whatever. From 5 to 12 per cent of the farm homes were engaged in such sale of food. Thus there was every chance that filth diseases would be carried to the urban consumer.¹¹

Nor does the menace end with commerce in foodstuffs. People carry disease with them. The countryman scatters infection in the town, and the townsman on vacation in the country returning home also brings it.

Causes of Neglected Rural Sanitation

1. The *individualistic mode of farm life* is the first causative factor in the problem of rural sanitation. Each farmstead is to all intents and purposes an isolated unit, providing its own water supply and disposing of its own sewage, practicing cleanliness or wallowing in filth as it sees fit. It creates and maintains conditions, in consequence, that may affect not only itself but the neighborhood as well, without thought for or interference from the neighbors. The primary difficulty, obviously, is lack of community interest or coöperation for the general welfare. Moreover, there is rarely any governmental agency that presumes to suggest or dictate to the farmer how he shall protect himself and his neighbors by sanitary living.

2. A second cause is *ignorance* of the nature of disease and its dissemination and of the methods of protection against it. As one has put it, "the farmer's knowledge of health is largely negative. If he or a member of his family falls ill he will call a doctor and do everything in his power to effect a cure. It has not occurred to him that the shallow, unprotected well, or the open spring or river

¹¹ See *op. cit.*, pp. 106, 128, 144, 156, 209, 229, 265.

from which he gets his drinking water may be the cause of his illness. As a rule he sees no danger in the open privy—in many instances having no privy of any kind, or in the lack of screens on doors and windows. A fly is simply a nuisance at meal time, or it may disturb his rest if perchance he takes a nap at the noon hour while the horses feed. Kinds, amounts and varieties of food are little thought of as having any bearing on health. The importance of milk in the diet of children is not understood and its absence has no particular significance to the rural parent.”¹² Often there is not only lack of information, but positive misinformation and superstition on health questions. The poor and prosperous alike are involved. In the Public Health Survey already referred to, one of the fifteen counties was canvassed as to the cause of typhoid fever. The answer given by three-fourths of the heads of the households where cases existed was that they didn’t know. Only one knew it was germs. In a similar inquiry of over 2,500 heads of households where there had been no recent cases, 38 per cent didn’t know the cause; about 23 per cent said “water”; about 12½ per cent said “dirt”; 10 per cent, “germs”; 4 per cent, “flies”; twelve persons, “excreta”; a similar number, “bad privy or cesspool.” Other groups gave as the cause “chills,” “green fruit,” “mosquitoes,” “milk,” “stomach troubles,” “marshes,” “fate,” “hot sun,” “exposure to bad weather,” and “heredity.” In addition some forty to fifty other causes were assigned by nearly as many different individuals. These ranged from “nursing typhoid,” thru “watermelons,” “worry,” “weeds,” “bad smells,” “oysters,” “frogs,” “crabs,” “rats,” to “going to church,” “tearing down old houses” and “mental suggestion.”¹³

The kinds of answers cited with reference to typhoid fever reveal, I suppose, the rural state of mind concerning the cause of many diseases.

3. A third factor is *diffusiveness*. Cities and towns have populations massed on small areas. The physical difficulties in providing

¹² Edward N. Clopper, *Rural Child Welfare*, p. 25. Copyright by The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1922. Used by permission.

¹³ *Rural Sanitation*, p. 41.

a common water supply, sewage systems, street cleaning, and garbage disposal are, therefore, relatively simple. In contrast, widely scattered farmsteads with so few people on extensive areas present tremendous difficulties in providing such facilities.

This diffusiveness is not only physical; it is also mental and governmental. Mass action, as suggested under the first factor mentioned, is not easy in a scattered population. No such stimuli prompt it as with large numbers of people living in a congested district. Moreover, government in the open country has not customarily concerned itself with problems of health and sanitation. There is no machinery, such as municipalities have, for mobilizing neighborhoods in common undertakings.

4. *Expense* is another barrier to adequate sanitation in the country, whether viewed as an individual or as a community undertaking. In those sections where the need is greatest there are large numbers of poor tenants and croppers who own no homes and who move frequently from one place to another. They are unable to provide decent surroundings for themselves, and the landlords do not see any necessity for doing it nor any gain to be derived from the outlay required.

Where the farm operator is also the owner, too often the cost of making his surroundings reasonably sanitary may be greater than his economic status will justify, even tho the cost is not high. If, however, a clean barnyard, a pure water supply, a safe disposal of human waste and house sewage, and adequate screening are to be provided by many farms, a relatively large outlay will often be involved. Even when these can be afforded, problems of drainage which the individual farmer cannot handle will often remain.

From a community standpoint, even if sewer and water systems were generally feasible for country neighborhoods, the amount of taxable property and income in the average district is too small to bear the cost. Such provisions for health protection as the city enjoys can be had, if at all, only at incomparably greater cost by the country, and the latter is less able to bear it.

Withal rural sanitation is recognized as one of the most difficult

as well as most important problems confronting the rural community and the nation.¹⁴

Means of Improving Sanitation and Health

The immediate attack must be thru education. The country people must be made acquainted with the sources of disease, how it is transmitted and how it may be curbed. They must be taught the importance of prevention rather than cure and to that end be persuaded to tax themselves, that the necessary protection may be secured. Any effort that will accomplish results on a wide scale must meet and break down superstition, resistance to innovation, and often positive opposition, especially by local physicians who profit by curing the sick. Both juvenile and adult education are involved, the one chiefly thru the schools and the other in the demonstration to the farmer of just what may be accomplished.

The demonstration method has done much in improving agricultural production, controlling plant and animal pests and diseases, and is equally effective when applied to health and sanitation. This method has been adopted by the United States Public Health Service in coöperation with state and local health organizations.

A Sanitary Commission set up in the Southern States by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1908 was the first organized effort in the interest of rural health in America. Its work led to the organization in 1911 of the first county health unit under the U. S. Public Health Service.

This service makes a county-wide sanitary and health survey, maps the findings, and conducts a campaign of education. The following is a typical instance of a program carried out in a Mississippi county:

1. An accurate health Survey of every home in the county. In making this canvass a trained worker visited each home and took the name and age of each member of the family. A record was made of all important diseases which had occurred in the family

¹⁴ *Op cit.*, p. 8.

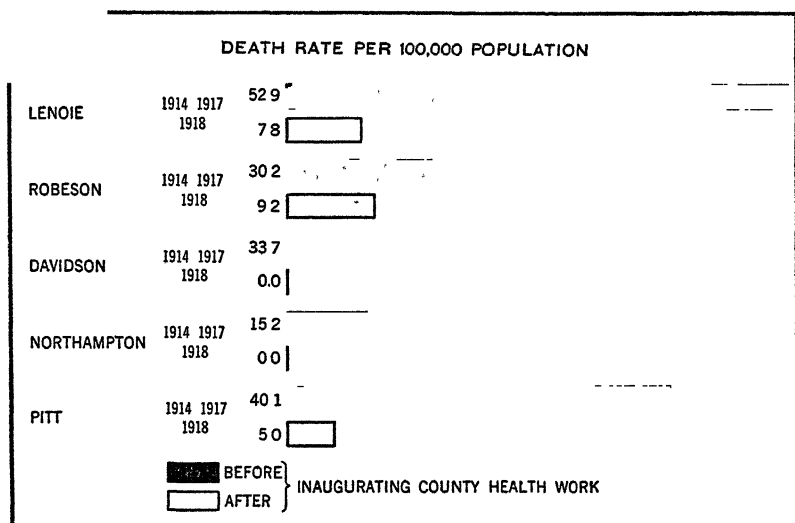
within the preceding five years. A careful note was also made of the sanitary conditions of the home. The purpose of the work was fully explained to the family and they were told of the seriousness of the soil-pollution disease. Instructive bulletins on infant care, typhoid fever, hookworm disease, pellagra, tuberculosis, and rural sanitation were left in the home.

2. Examination and treatment of all persons for hookworm disease.
3. Medical inspection of all school children.
4. Giving typhoid vaccine to all.
5. Instructing in infant welfare work.
6. Making a health map of the county.
7. Putting on a health educational campaign.
8. Dairy inspection.
9. Hotel, meat market, barber shop, soda fountain and grocery store inspection.

The effects of work of this sort have been notable. In the following graphs a few illustrations may be seen.

The rural efforts of the U. S. Public Health Service focus on the promotion of a full-time County Health Service. Such organizations have proved to be the best means of accomplishing the primary aim of the work. A full-time county health organization should consist of a medical officer, a clerk, technician or bacteriologist, one or more public health nurses, and, if necessary, a sanitary inspector, all giving full time. Generally the staff is not so complete as this, including only a medical officer, a nurse and an office clerk. The program involves making personal contacts with the homes and promoting health education. At the outset every effort is made to emphasize the outstanding problems of each county. By this means it is sought to awaken interest and secure support that will make the work permanent. Thus in many Southern counties the filth-borne diseases—hookworm, typhoid fever, diarrhea, dysentery—are given first attention. In others malaria control is stressed. Elsewhere it may be tuberculosis, infant welfare, venereal disease, and maternity.¹⁵

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.



81. Reduction of Death Rate from Typhoid Fever under Control Methods in Five North Carolina Counties

Source: Ferrell, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Rural Health Organizations

A rural area of considerable extent is necessary to sustain an effective health organization. The county has therefore been taken as the best unit.

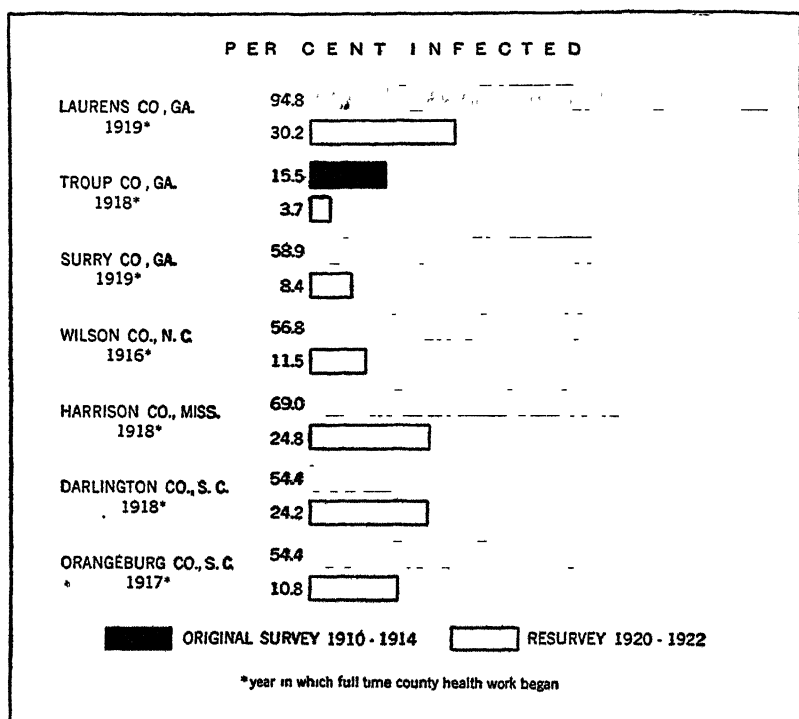
The Public Health Service allots to a county a sum, which must be duplicated from state and local or private sources. A qualified director of public health work acceptable to the local and state health boards is then appointed and the organization already described is set up.

Full-time county health service was first initiated in Guilford County, North Carolina, in 1911. Since then a gradual expansion of this service has taken place until by 1937, there were 946 counties under it. Figures 84 and 85 show the distribution of this service and the percentage of the rural population reached by it.

The 946 counties include 41.7 per cent of the rural population, but the majority of rural counties, or some 1,554, were at this date

without any such service.¹⁶ Probably less than fifty of the rural counties have health service on a par with that found in the most progressive cities.

It will be observed that only six states have complete service. Obviously, to extend it to all the states will be a large undertaking.



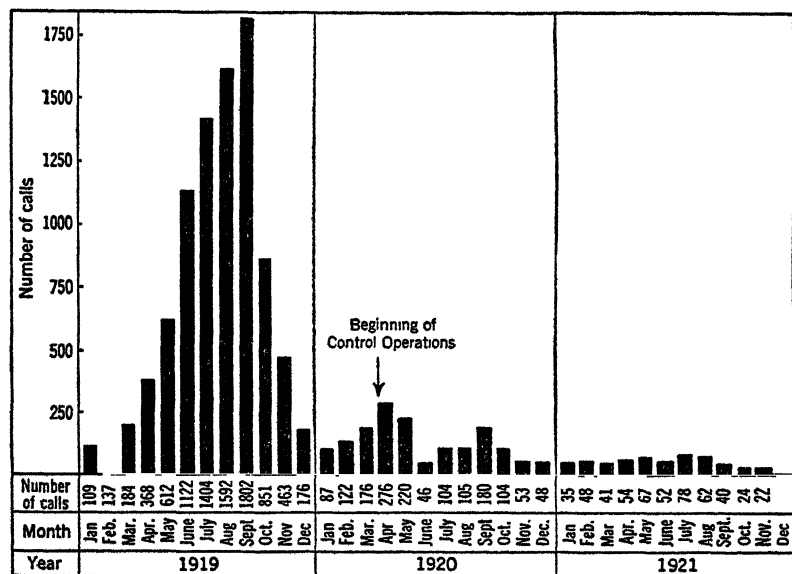
82. Reduction in Hookworm in Southern Counties under Control Measures

Source: Ferrell, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

Prior to 1935, federal appropriations for this purpose were irregular and meager, ranging from nothing to a maximum of \$347,000, reached in 1929. Only about 1 per cent of the budget of the Public Health Service went for rural sanitation. Local governments generally were indifferent to health needs. The *Reports of*

¹⁶ *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 52, 1937, p. 1664.

the Public Health Service emphasized the fact that without moral support and financial aid from other sources the local governments had no disposition to appropriate adequate funds for the support of efficient service.¹⁷ The federal funds serve primarily to encourage and stimulate local appropriations. The chief support of 91 per cent



83. Reduction in Physicians' Calls for Malaria in Two Texas Towns Due to Control Operations

Source: *The Survey*, Aug. 15, 1922, p. 626.

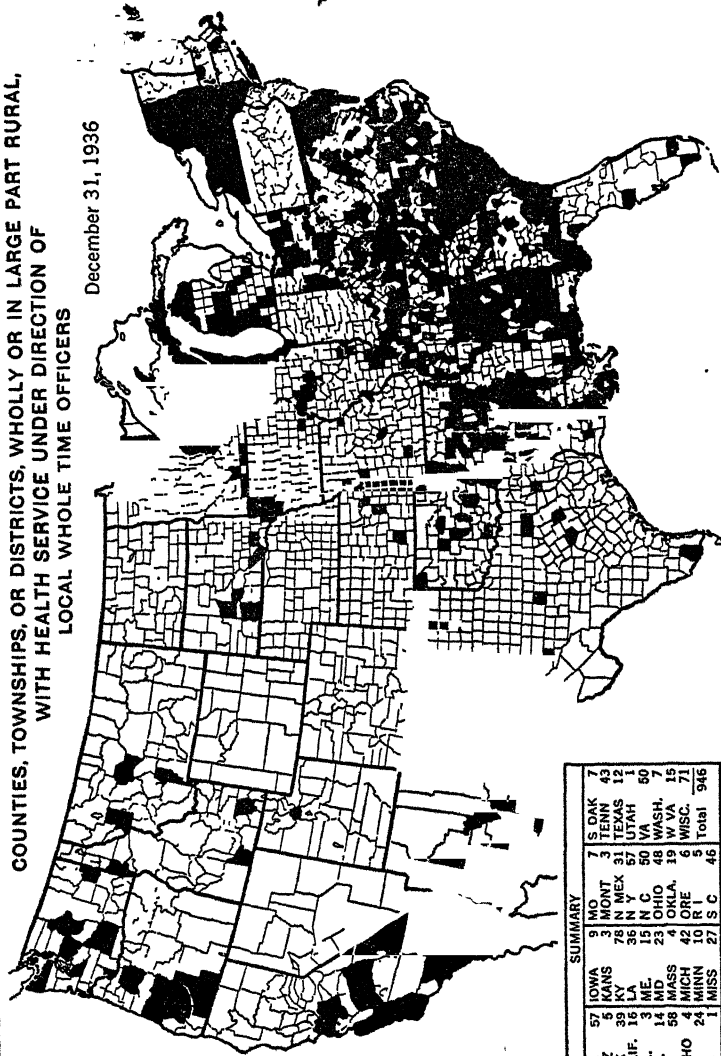
of the local units was, in addition to the U. S. Public Health Service, the State Board of Health, the Rockefeller Foundation, Rosenwald Fund, Commonwealth Fund, Couzens Fund, and the Woman's Hospital Fund.

All agencies combined spent about \$5,000,000 annually on rural health and sanitation whereas it would have required \$20,000,000 on a 45 cents per capita basis to have served all rural counties. But the Milbank Fund demonstration in Cattaraugus County, New

¹⁷ *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 19, p. 1078, U. S. Public Health Service.

COUNTIES, TOWNSHIPS, OR DISTRICTS, WHOLLY OR IN LARGE PART RURAL,
WITH HEALTH SERVICE UNDER DIRECTION OF
LOCAL WHOLE TIME OFFICERS

December 31, 1936



SUMMARY			
ALA	57	IOWA	9
ARIZ	3	KANS	3
ARK	39	MO	7
CALIF.	16	MONT	3
DEL.	14	N MEX	43
GA	58	N C	31
IDAHO	4	OKLA	48
ILL.	24	ORE	19
IND	1	R I	6
		S C	46
		TENN	7
		TEXAS	12
		UTAH	50
		VA	50
		WASH.	7
		W VA	15
		WISC.	71
		Total	946

84. Rural Areas with Fulltime Public Health Service, December 31, 1936

Rural areas (in black) having whole-time health service, December 31, 1936

STATE	COUNTIES UNDER FULL TIME ADMINISTRATION				%	PERCENTAGE OF RURAL POPULATION SERVED AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1936										
	JAN. 1		DEC. 31			10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
	1933	1934	1935	1936												
1 DELAWARE	3	3	3	3	100.0											
2 MARYLAND	22	23	23	23	100.0											
3 NEW MEXICO	6	6	31	31	100.0											
4 NEW YORK	5	5	5	57	100.0											
5 SO. CAROLINA	23	23	23	46	100.0											
6 WISCONSIN	0	0	0	71	100.0											
7 ALABAMA	46	50	56	57	88.5											
8 MAINE	5	5	2	15	86.1											
9 RHODE ISLAND	0	0	0	5	74.0											
10 KENTUCKY	73	70	75	78	69.9											
11 LOUISIANA	31	32	34	36	63.6											
12 NO. CAROLINA	36	41	53	50	62.6											
13 ARIZONA	4	4	4	5	61.8											
14 VIRGINIA	16	17	40	50	61.8											
15 OHIO	40	39	40	48	61.4											
16 ARKANSAS	21	19	19	39	59.4											
17 CALIFORNIA	13	15	16	16	57.2											
18 TENNESSEE	34	39	36	43	55.4											
19 MICHIGAN	30	33	39	42	47.1											
20 WEST VIRGINIA	13	13	14	15	43.6											
21 MISSISSIPPI	24	25	25	27	43.2											
22 WASHINGTON	8	8	8	7	38.8											
23 GEORGIA	30	30	31	58	38.4											
24 OREGON	6	7	6	6	36.8											
25 OKLAHOMA	0	1	2	19	26.4											
26 FLORIDA	2	2	3	14	25.1											
27 ILLINOIS	1	1	0	24	24.0											
28 MISSOURI	9	8	6	7	18.5											
29 IDAHO	0	0	0	4	18.4											
30 MASSACHUSETTS	3	3	3	4	14.4											
31 MINNESOTA	1	1	1	10	14.4											
32 SO. DAKOTA	1	0	0	7	10.4											
33 IOWA	1	1	1	9	9.9											
34 MONTANA	4	4	3	3	8.0											
35 TEXAS	8	7	9	12	7.9											
36 KANSAS	4	3	3	3	5.7											
37 UTAH	2	2	1	1	4.6											
38 INDIANA	0	0	0	1	1.6											
39 PENNSYLVANIA	3	0	0	0	0.0											
40 CONNECTICUT	2	2	0	0	0.0											
41 COLORADO	0	0	0	0	0.0											
42 NEBRASKA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
43 NEVADA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
44 NEW HAMPSHIRE	0	0	0	0	0.0											
45 NEW JERSEY	0	0	0	0	0.0											
46 NO. DAKOTA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
47 VERMONT	0	0	0	0	0.0											
48 WYOMING	0	0	0	0	0.0											
TOTALS	530	542	615	946	41.7											

85. Percentage of the Rural Population under Fulltime Public Health Service, December 31, 1936

Number of whole-time county or local district health units, by States, 1933-36, and percentage of rural population served on December 31, 1936. Source: *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 51, p. 1133.

York, showed that \$2 per capita was necessary for a really effective service, hence rural America should have \$100,000,000 annually.

The Social Security Act of 1935 provided a budget of \$10,000,000 annually for the Public Health Service. Of this \$2,000,000 are allocated to research, and \$8,000,000 are distributed to the states on the basis of population, needs, or special health problems. Since it is the rural areas that have the greatest problems, the bulk of these funds will tend to go for the development and maintenance of county health service. While this is a notable step forward, it does not solve the problem.

Curiously enough, no support for an effective public health program is forthcoming from the American Medical Association. Everywhere it fights Federal Aid to local health units and works against them when they are established. However, this opposition of vested interests will probably be overcome long before the ignorance, indifference, and poverty of the rural community disappear.

It is estimated that preventable illness costs rural America from one to ten billions of dollars annually. If an outlay of \$20,000,000 would save one billion, as it seems reasonable to think, there would accrue a net saving of \$980,000,000 to the rural public.¹⁸ Only as the nation comes to realize that it may be quite as profitable to safeguard health as it is to protect live stock and crops from disease and pests and to build defenses against possible enemies, will adequate health service be secured.

The Rural Hospital and Medical Aid

There is a lack of physicians in the country districts. Perhaps not over 12 per cent of the rural population are adequately supplied. In the more isolated sections there are often no physicians at all.

For a generation the ratio of physicians to population in rural territory has been declining. In 1929 rural territory had 48 per cent of the population and but 31 per cent of the physicians of the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

nation, while cities of 100,000 and over had 30 per cent of the population and 44 per cent of the physicians. In 1929 there were 126 physicians per 100,000 of the nation's population, but the inequality of their distribution is seen in the fact that there were 78 per 100,000 population in all communities of 5,000 or less and 185 per 100,000 in all places of 100,000 and over.¹⁹

For example, in the state of Ohio in 1931 there was in urban areas one physician to 618 of the population, whereas in rural areas there was only one to 1,572 of the population.²⁰ In a number of states where 70 to 85 per cent of the people live in the country, only one doctor will be found for every 1,000 to 1,500 persons.

The decrease of physicians in rural areas was fully disclosed in Pusey's survey in 1925 and Leland's in 1931.²¹ The reports indicate that the percentage of physicians in small country towns dropped from 29.5 per cent in 1906 to 13.4 in 1931.

Altho the dearth of physicians in much rural territory is serious, a considerable part of the country population is in reach of urban centers where medical service is available. This increasing town-centering of rural life in consequence of the telephone and automobile tends in a measure to offset the shortage of resident rural physicians.²²

The cause of this decline of rural medical service is assigned by Dr. Pusey, first, to the high cost of medical education, which country boys cannot afford; second, to the cultural disadvantages of rural life, which has nothing to offer the type of doctor that is now being educated, described as "the country club type"; and third, to the reduction in the number of medical schools *pari passu* with the increasing cost of education.

¹⁹ I. S. Falk, C. R. Rorem, and M. D. Ring, *The Cost of Medical Care*, University of Chicago Press, 1933, pp. 197-198.

²⁰ C. E. Lively, "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio, A Study of Trends, 1921-1931," Ohio Agricultural Exp. Station Bulletin No. 529, Sept., 1933, p. 19.

²¹ See *The Distribution of Physicians in the United States*, General Education Board 1924; W. A. Pusey, *Medical Education and Medical Service, Some Further Facts and Considerations*; Chicago American Medical Association, 1926, and *Medical Education and Medical Service*, 1925, by same author, R. G. Leland, *Distribution of Physicians in the United States*, Chicago, American Medical Association, 1935.

²² I. S. Falk, C. R. Rorem, and M. C. Ring, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

There are additional factors, also. One is the lure of specialization for the rising generation of doctors. The country does not call for specialists; it needs general practitioners. Hence an inadequate supply of doctors in rural districts. Another is the relatively unremunerative practice of the country—unremunerative because the country people cannot pay such charges as the city population does. Still another is the hardship that the country doctor must endure in the pursuit of his calling—long rides, exposure to all kinds of weather, poor facilities for handling his cases, lack of aid from other expert physicians, and the absence of sources of professional stimulation such as cities afford. There are, to be sure, certain developments that are tending to make the country a more inviting field than hitherto. Good roads, motor travel, and telephones are making conditions easier. But they do not offset the social and economic drawbacks.

In 65 or more rural communities in the Province of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Canada, physicians are hired out of tax money on a yearly salary to furnish medical service. One doctor serves about 3,000 people at an annual cost of from \$7.50 to \$11.50 for each family. Here socialized medicine is developing with significant results in a declining death and morbidity rate. Those who are coöperating to provide themselves with this service are reported to be thoroly satisfied with the results. Moreover, the cost per family averaged only one-third of the amount spent on illness by the average rural family in the United States. According to the Committee on the Cost of Medical Care, this was \$33.80.²³

So far, coöperative or socialized projects for medical service have made only a beginning in rural America. There are a few instances of voluntary farmers' health associations, Mount Airy, North Carolina, being a case in point. There protection is secured for \$15 per family per year. Tax supported medical service for all the people of a community comparable to that in Canada is almost unknown. Indian Lake in the Adirondack Mountains of New York furnishes an instance of this type. A tax provides its only doctor a

²³ W. W. Wheeler, "Where Doctors Send No Bills," *The Reader's Digest*, July, 1935, pp. 75-77.

salary of \$3,000 per year and a dentist \$2,000 per year to take care of the teeth of all the children.²⁴

The most interesting development of rural medical service is being fostered by the Farm Security Administration. In twenty states, half of them in the South and the rest in the Middle West and West, some 78,000 low-income farm families are being provided with medical care at a cost of \$20 to \$30 per family per year thru coöperative medical associations. Money to organize them is loaned by the government. In 1939 there were 228 in operation. Thus all the medical needs of the member families are met without unduly burdening anyone. The doctors are paid on a pro rata basis. The scheme is a form of voluntary health insurance for the clients and a protection against unreasonable hardship for the doctor.²⁵ It is an experiment having great possibilities.

There is a dearth of hospitals as well as physicians in rural areas. In 1934 hospitals were found in 1,779 counties, while nearly 1,300 counties had none. In some cases the people living in counties without hospitals had access to those of an adjacent county, but for the most part no such facilities were within reach. In the South conditions were the worst.²⁶ If two beds per 1,000 population in a radius of 50 miles from the hospitals were allowed, 22,000 new hospitals were called for to supply the needs of the entire country in 1934.²⁷ Even that would not provide adequate service, which, it is estimated, requires one hospital bed for each 150 persons.

Iowa legalized taxation for and built the first rural hospital in 1909. Since that date similar enabling legislation has been passed by most states and a number of hospitals have been built. Private philanthropy has frequently helped provide them. However, the agricultural depression and other factors, such as the rising cost of building and equipment, opposition to more taxes, and jealousy

²⁴ Carroll P. Streeter, "Reorganizing Rural Health Facilities," *Proceedings Eighteenth Country Life Conference*, University of Chicago Press, 1936, pp. 47-59.

²⁵ R. C. Williams, "Medical Care Plans for Low-Income Farm Families," *The Health Officer*, Vol. 3, January, 1939, pp. 245-249, U. S. Public Health Service.

²⁶ Blanche Halbert, "Hospitals for Rural Communities," *Farmers' Bulletin No. 1792*, U.S.D.A., November, 1937, p. 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

among local physicians, have intervened practically to stop the movement. At the same time, the rapid extension of motor transportation and improved highways have served to bring more country people within easy reach of city hospitals and so to lessen somewhat the pressure for local ones. Larger hospital areas than the county also are becoming possible. However, the limit seems to be a district with a radius of 50 miles.²⁸

Since 1930, the American Hospital Association reports, hospitals, mostly rural, have been closed at the rate of 100 a year, while others have struggled to exist. Many have been poorly equipped and managed institutions of little value to the communities in which they are located.²⁹ The tradition of home nursing, together with suspicion of hospital service, has worked against them.

The country doubtless pays a high price for the lack of hospitals, especially in deaths from childbirth and in infant mortality. Ever since 1929 in the Birth Registration Areas the death rate of infants under one year has been higher in rural territory than in urban districts. From 20 to 30 per cent of the confinements, largely rural, are estimated to be without medical attention, to say nothing of the absence of such facilities as only hospitals afford. However, the maternal death rate of the country is about that of the cities.³⁰

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Topics for Discussion

1. Since the death rate is generally considered the measure of civilization and since this rate is normally lower in the open country than in urban areas, why may we not say that American rural civilization is higher than urban?

2. What are the public health functions performed by each of the three units of government, federal, state and local?

3. Discuss pro and con the question of medical coöperatives for American rural communities.

4. Would universal full-time public health service for the rural population solve the health problem of the country?

5. Are unfavorable rural health conditions due more to the lack of medical and health service or to the ignorance of the population concerning sanitation and disease?

6. Which in general has the better balanced diet, country or city folks?

7. Which would be the more effective methods of introducing sanitary measures, such as complete house screening against flies and mosquitoes, in a community where such measures were not in use—to get a law passed requiring it, or to induce a few families to try it on the assumption that their example would be generally imitated?

Part VI

SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESSES

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESS IN RURAL- URBAN CIVILIZATION

MODERN civilization is a complex including both rural and urban culture. The interactions of these two phases constitute part of the social process; hence sociology, whether rural or urban, must concern itself with the goings-on in this field of inter-group relations. That indeed we have been doing in a more or less detailed fashion thruout this work, but it will be profitable to turn from the particular to the more general in order to get a better grasp of the whole. If we attempt a sketch of the main cultural developments of western civilization in modern times as they have appeared in rural-urban relations, the results may further the student's understanding of the subject.

Town and Country Culture Basically Different

Two fundamentally different modes of getting a living set the rural and urban worlds apart. The former may be characterized as the *extractive* means and the latter as the *creative*. Farming, lumbering, mining, and fishing are productive chiefly in a limited sense. In one way or another they produce merely by taking out of nature's storehouse what the earth is pleased to yield. Man's ingenuity in these pursuits is mainly exercised in husbanding, conserving, securing or appropriating the resources at hand rather than in bringing anything into being. He is primarily a caretaker, a manager; not a creator or maker. In contrast, those who follow the basic occupations of the urban world are largely given to creating things *de novo*. Urban production thus means to originate, to bring into being the hitherto non-existent. Man ceases to be a keeper and becomes an inventor. Art and science flourish at his hand, and an

almost endless succession of new forms, techniques, mechanisms, methods, systems, and ideas flows from the urban fountain.

These divergent pursuits have further significance in that they give rise to more or less contrasting general behavior modes in the people. The countryman, being essentially non-creative in his efforts to make a living, tends to become static in all other respects. With few exceptions his life moves in cycles almost as fixed as the seasons. So it transpires that agriculture has experienced relatively few changes thruout its long history, and the annals of its people have been uneventful. There has been, in fact, but little development in its essential features since the day of its origin and rarely anything that could be called a revolution. Altho its advent marked the beginning of civilization, for it placed man in a position of mastery over nature and destiny that made the gods tremble, it was and is and always will be a cultural stage of strictly limited possibilities. Nevertheless it was the first triumphant stage in man's cultural advancement. So long a time did it prevail that civilization and agriculture became not only synonymous but synchronous.

The activities of urban man have, on the other hand, given rise to very different consequences, for they have been highly stimulating and provocative to his mental life. There has been constant challenge to seek new conquests; hence urban history has been a record of endless achievement. The impulse to evolution and revolution present in its culture has enabled the city to acquire ever-increasing power and ascendancy. In brief, behavior has been dynamic. Eventually evolving the capitalistic-industrial system, we see urbanism superseding agriculture as the master of human destiny. Now it is urbanism that is synonymous with civilization, while agriculture stands outmoded and relegated to a marginal position along with the hunting and pastoral economies that preceded it.

The all important difference between urban and rural pursuits is, we emphasize, that one gives a static and the other a dynamic cultural complex. The dynamic, naturally enough, is the more powerful and aggressive; it inevitably tends to dominate and to shape the whole cultural life of the nation. How this has come about can be made clear by tracing somewhat in detail the interactions of

town and country society. Any effort of this sort will find us dealing with the social processes.

Urban Ascendancy

The ancient world saw the city attain supremacy. In Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome urbanism rose to power and long held sway. Then came a period of decadence thruout the great cultural areas, to be followed by the slow emergence of western European society under feudal organization. During the manorial era, which lasted for about a thousand years, agriculture was everywhere the chief pursuit and its cultural patterns prevailed almost universally. It might be said that at that time urban society was in its swaddling clothes thruout the west. The manor completely overshadowed it. However, town life was growing up and by the Thirteenth Century it had attained something of the stature of youthful maturity. The development and widening of markets during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries caused urban power to wax mighty and to claim cultural supremacy. Thus arrived modern urbanism, a period, to quote Spengler, "when the development of the city had reached such a point of power that it had no longer to defend itself against country and chivalry, but on the contrary had become a despotism against which the land and its basic order of society were fighting a hopeless defensive battle—in the spiritual domain against nationalism, in the political against democracy, in the economic against money."¹

Conflict was a conspicuous process in the rise of the city. The clash of rural and urban interests began to be heard in every western land. It involved many issues, took numerous forms, fluctuated in intensity and gave rise to various consequences before its course was run. The stakes were of divers sorts; such as political, economic, moral, religious, and educational. Armies, confederations, organizations, parties, parliaments, statutes, constitutions, ballots, fortunes, propaganda were among the instruments employed by the contending parties. When the cities first began to assert themselves,

¹ Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West* (tr. Atkinson), Vol. II, p. 97.

it was to gain the rights and privileges which the manors monopolized and denied them. These were free markets, release from the oppressive obligations imposed by castle and cathedral, guarantees of untrammelled trade, opportunities for the pursuit of corporate life, liberty and happiness in their own way. The struggle was at the outstart that of the weak against the strong. Burgher met baron in an endeavor to wrest from unyielding hands whatsoever might be gained. On the continent both about the Mediterranean and about the Baltic, city joined with city in leagues and confederations to resist the feudal lords and to further the cause of municipal rights. In England, as one might expect from her traditional behavior, it was a lone-handed struggle, with each city fighting by and for itself and devil take the hindmost! There were no urban alliances nor confederations. Each town contended against its overlord and bishop as best it could, now gaining some ground, now losing it, in a prolonged fight which, however, eventuated in victory and power for the burghers.

The conflict had its roots, of course, in the domination and exploitation of the towns by the manors. Rarely indeed have rural and urban interests been related in any other fashion, whether conflict has become manifest or not. Since that early time, the position of country and city has been reversed, but under the European feudal system the country regularly dominated and exploited the towns. When, therefore, we hear the bitter complaints of countrymen in America today against the city for its corporate ruthlessness, its greedy wealth, its unfettered privileges, its political supremacy and economic dictatorship while everything rural languishes and decays, it is to hear nothing new. The age old processes of domination and exploitation are merely wringing cries and blood out of their victims as they have ever done; only now it is the country that suffers and wails whereas once it was the towns.

It will give perspective on the present if we note the state of English towns when the feudal lords held sway. The case of Winchester in 1450 well illustrates the situation. Its condition, as the burghers declared, "is become right desolate." The historian says:

"Nine hundred and ninety-seven houses stood empty and in seventeen parish churches there was no longer any service. A list is given of eleven streets 'that be fallen down in the city of Winchester within eighty years last passed'; and in each case an account is added of the number of householders that had formerly lived in the street, a hundred, a hundred and forty, or two hundred as the case might be, where there were now but two or three left. Since the last Parliament held there, eighty-one households had fallen. 'The desolation of the said poor city is so great, and yearly falling, for there is such a decay and unwinn that without gracious comfort of the King our sovereign lord, the mayor and the bailiffs must of necessity cease and deliver up the city and the keys into the King's hands.' " ²

Altho Winchester's plight was doubtless extreme and perhaps without parallel in England, its lot was nevertheless shared in a general way by all the towns. The "outbreaks of popular fury in which," says Green, "from time to time the irritation of the burghers found expression have often been represented as symptoms of a spirit of malice and misrule by which an ignorant mob was instigated to attack the most beneficent institution known to their society and with no justification save from their lawless temper, seek to appropriate to themselves its privileges and possessions. But the causes of the conflict were more valid and serious." ³ Baronial rule, lay and ecclesiastic, was responsible for their plight, and the "boroughs were forced as a mere matter of self-preservation into insistent and reiterated demands" that supreme control be relinquished by the feudal powers. "When the pole-axes and daggers with which they at first sought to enforce their convictions were laid aside, they turned to the law-courts and the paper wars of Westminster to seek a remedy for their grievances; and it is in the records of the trials from the middle of the Fifteenth Century to the Reformation in which the pleadings of both sides may be heard that we find the real justification of the burghers' claim to civic

² Mrs. J. R. Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, Vol. I, pp. 326-327. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

supremacy, and of their determined assaults" upon the prevailing authority.⁴

Such accounts read much like recent chronicles of American country life and the struggles of the farmers. It is not now that we read of city streets that "be fallen down," or parish churches without services, of abandoned households in the towns, or generally of urban desolation, but it has been for decades of rural populations that have fallen, of country churches that have closed, of prices that have sunk to such levels that there is universal "unwin" in agriculture, of farms abandoned, of country desolation and despair. Moreover, it is of embattled farmers and rural riots that we have read, and of Holiday Associations and Protective Organizations that have risen in revolt against the domination of urban interests. Most of all, it has been of "paper wars" in Washington (like those of old in Westminster) over the grievances of the oppressed agriculturists.

However, quite unlike that of the Fifteenth Century, the outcome of the rural-urban conflict has not been to the great advantage of the revolting group. Urban culture, so much more effective in its control of the environment than the rural, securing such greater satisfaction for immensely larger numbers and exercising incomparably more certain mastery over human destiny, calmly holds its rightful sway. It does it because its culture is in fact the civilization of the modern world.

Diffusion of the Primary Urban Culture

Naturally, that culture which is the more effective, resourceful, expansive, and dynamic will spread and superimpose its patterns upon the whole of any society of which it is a part; it will overflow the relatively static areas of the feebler culture. That is what the urban culture is doing in America today. Everywhere its patterns are being diffused over the rural regions. The urbanization of rural society is a fact of common observation. What it amounts to in terms of social process is domination and exploitation of the

⁴ *Ibid.*

country by the city, together with the resulting conflict, to mention only a few of the ongoings involved.

In making these generalizations the fact cannot be ignored that some reciprocal influence between country and city exists. Even tho there is urban domination, it is not supreme. The economic culture of cities is in a measure at least determined by the nature of the region in which they are located. That is apparent in such cases as Chicago, New York, New Orleans, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Butte, San Francisco, and many other American cities. Their industries and commercial interests reflect more or less the hinterland. The surrounding country supplies the economic resources of the city.⁵ To that extent the city is dependent upon the country and is dominated by it, but it is a situational, passive domination in contrast to the positive, aggressive, culture-shaping influence of the city on the country.

A more detailed analysis of the urban complex and the diffusion of its elements will indicate what is happening. Since it is the material culture that plays a determining role, first notice will be given it. The material aspects of modern industrial society are marked by certain characteristics suggested by the terms commercialism, capitalism, mechanization, specialization, and organization. These traits are of urban genesis and traditionally have not been associated with agriculture.

1. *Commercialism*, by which is meant the practice of trading in goods or the exchange of commodities, is an essential phase of city life. Urban enterprises are virtually all commercial. That indeed is the object of production or manufacture. When exchange stops, production ceases. Trade is as necessary to the existence of the city as is the circulation of blood to an organism. Money is the medium thru which trade flows. Markets, commercial routes, transportation systems, financial institutions are other devices for facilitating commerce. When and where cities are wanting, agricultural society is untouched by commercial practices; and only where ur-

⁵ See H. W. Adam and H. E. Moore, *American Regionalism*, Henry Holt, 1938; N. S. B. Gras, "Regionalism and Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs*, 1929, pp. 459-465; W. F. Ogburn, "Regions," *Social Forces*, Oct., 1936, pp. 6-12.

banism prevails does farming pass under the system. A few generations ago, when eighty to eighty-five of every hundred Americans lived on farms, agriculture was generally non-commercial, but today, when seventy-five out of every hundred people are living in towns, it is almost wholly so. Self-sufficient farming prevailed in the pre-urban period. Production was for use, for the immediate consumption of those who lived on the soil and tilled it. Exchange was not the end in view and where it took place at all it was largely incidental. Money was little needed then and its use was negligible. It was the rise of modern industry that changed the situation. With it came an urban demand for food and raw materials. Money and manufactured commodities were offered in exchange for farm products and thus the wants of agricultural people were stimulated until production shifted to a monetary and commercial basis. So the farmer presently found himself compelled to earn his living by producing for the market. Thus the commercial pattern was thrust upon rural society and money-getting became as necessary to the soil tiller as to the urban dweller. In fact, the completeness of the farmer's dependence upon money measures the absoluteness of the commercialization to which he has been subjected.

2. *Specialization* in production is fostered by commercialism in agriculture even as in urban industry. It has grown until almost every art and craft except husbandry has been drawn from rural to urban areas. The city has acquired monopoly of the arts by perfecting and utilizing them so efficiently under the factory system that goods are made cheaper than ever they were by rural craftsmen. The cost of living is to that extent lowered, but the farmer can no longer consume the goods without money and without price as once he did when they were the products of his own hands and skill. His dependence upon the town and upon a monetary system has thus become almost absolute.

The commercial system, moreover, has fostered specialization in husbandry itself. The need for a money crop has promoted it. Our cotton, corn, wheat, fruit, dairy, truck, and other areas are partially at least a response to this necessity. The effect has been to increase the dependency of farmers.

3. *Capitalization* is another trait of urban industry that has spread to agriculture. Farming has been forced to capitalize by the necessity of cultural conformity. So it has come about that two-thirds of the wealth of the farms of the United States is in land while the other third consists of operating capital, but the tendency is marked for the proportion of the latter to increase. The rapid growth of a tenant class indicates this, for it shows the impossibility of farm operators acquiring ownership of both land and capital at the same time. Once it was easy to become a landowner, for little capital was required to run a farm. Now, however, agriculture approaches capitalistic industry, where the workers have long since ceased to own the instruments of production. Just as the extensive employment of capital in the city creates a class of property owners and one of propertyless laborers, so does the introduction of large quantities of capital into agriculture bring about similar conditions among soil tillers.

Moreover, in consequence of the system, the agriculturalists have been driven to resort to mass production not unlike that in industry. In both fields the results are much the same. They are overcapitalization, overproduction, and glutted markets. The crop yield has increased way beyond national needs or world demand. At the same time the use of much capital has made the burden of cost greater than the ordinary farmer can bear; hence the profits of husbandry have vanished. The small farmer in particular begins to face extinction in competition with large-scale farming, just as the small enterpriser went to the wall in industry. Apparently only the economies secured by mass production can secure profit either in industry or in agriculture; but without profit, bankruptcy follows. Thus urban capitalism molds the country to its pattern in another respect and ruthlessly scourges the mass of soil tillers into a serfdom of wage-earning and mere subsistence farming.

4. *Organization* is still another trait of urban culture that is passing into agriculture. Its transfer has been inevitable along with the other patterns. Farmers' organizations have grown apace since the dawn of the Twentieth Century. The coöperative movement, embracing a third of the farm operators, represents commercial

agriculture adapting itself to city methods. This movement seeks thru corporate effort to control the market and conserve profits. Its underlying motive is the same as in industry where price-fixing and monopoly are sought. Nor does the fact that agricultural coöperation has been set up as a foil and protection against urban domination in anywise alter the case. Corporate farming also has appeared. In 1930 there were 9,600 such enterprises and many more in 1940. Altho few in number among the six million and more farms, they may well become the most important type in the course of a few years, for it is quite possible that profit-seeking agriculture will have to take that form to survive. The capitalistic system may require it. Indeed, it is a question whether a city-made civilization can tolerate the prevalence of a non-corporate mode anywhere. It may well be doubted if a nation's subsistence mores can remain half corporate and half individualistic. If profit-seeking agriculture is forced to incorporate, mode-of-living farming will survive only as a subordinate form among a low standard and marginal peasantry. They will cling to the soil and eke out an existence but play no important role in producing for the market.

Meantime, however, the urban culture may undergo radical change and the capitalistic system give place to some other. If this should happen, there is no reason to think that the city will not continue, perchance with even greater assurance than now, to impose its patterns upon rural society. This it has quickly done in Soviet Russia under communism. However much the process may have been hastened by a proletarian dictatorship, it is probable that natural diffusion would in a little longer time have accomplished the same ends, for cultural consistency will tend, I suppose, to establish itself in any type of civilization. If the urban order is a capitalistic one, so will the rural be; and by the same logic, if the urban turns communistic, the rural will sooner or later follow suit.

Diffusion of the Secondary Urban Culture

From the foregoing analysis it should be clear how far the primary mores are being transferred from city to country. The secondary mores are undergoing a like diffusion. They too will

have to be considered if the full import of the social process is to be grasped.

The secondary mores of the city are being established in the country by two methods; one by the indirect tendency of all dependent variables to change with the alteration of the primary or independent culture, and the other by the direct diffusion of urban patterns of the secondary sort into rural areas.

The *community form* is a part of the secondary culture closely dependent upon the subsistence mores. As the rural economy has changed, so has the community. The neighborhood and trade center have undergone definite alteration. Wider trade zones and areas of association have appeared in response to new needs. Motor transit has greatly facilitated this but there have been still more trenchant forces at work. The capitalistic system abhors restriction and localism; it demands extension. At the same time the megalopolis has arisen to cast its shadow over an ever widening sphere. Thus much of America has come directly under metropolitan influence. The Fifteenth Census revealed ninety-three cities of 100,000 or more population each, while in them and within a radius of twenty-five miles of these centers there were found dwelling nearly half the nation's people. Within these regions of conurbation the local community has lost most of its identity by being swallowed up in the larger aggregate. Likewise in the sections far remote from the great centers there are many smaller cities exerting somewhat the same influence over the local neighborhoods about them until the mobility, fluidity, and expansiveness of the urban aggregate tend to decommunitize the country even as its own life has been deprived of local centers.

Primary grouping also is giving place to forms of secondary association under the pressure of rural capitalism and of urban example. Mention has already been made of the coöperative movement in connection with the primary mores, but it represents the secondary also insofar as it gives a different basis of association. Functional grouping is thus supplanting personal association.

A new *education* fostered by profit farming has appeared. Time was when a self-sufficient agriculture had little need of formal

education. What mattered were the handed-down techniques which were acquired under the natural apprenticeship relation of child and parent. Even the three 'R's offered by the schools were as much of an adornment as a necessity. But now the handed-down practices and wisdom scarcely suffice; it takes scientific knowledge, business training, managerial ability, and familiarity with the problem of markets to be a successful farmer. Hence education takes on new importance and receives new emphasis in the schools as well as from a variety of special agencies. Thus another phase of the derivative culture begins to conform to the basic mores.

A modified *religion* somewhat more in harmony with the new conditions is slowly emerging. The extremely emotional reactions to the natural order that once prevailed do not comport well with the profit seeking system. The result is the appearance of more rational attitudes. The wise husbandman will leave little to Providence under present conditions. He must be his own Providence if he is to succeed; hence he wastes no time praying for rain as once farmers did. Weather forecasts and treatises on growing drought-resistant crops occupy his attention instead. He does not meekly accept it as a chastisement of the Lord and do penance when his hogs get cholera; he makes inquiry as to the source of infection and hastens to have the herd vaccinated. Nor does he attribute lean years and hard times to neglect of worship, as did his forefathers, and seek remedy by increased devotions, but the chances are that he will join a farmers' organization in an appeal to Washington for relief legislation. Thus religious observance declines or, if continued, takes on a more rationalized and sublimated form.

This analysis of the secondary mores of rural society might be much extended, but perhaps enough has been said to make clear how, by the "strain toward consistency" which is operative as well as by the direct transference of urban patterns, the rural culture is becoming urbanized.

The Prospects

The ascendancy and consequent diffusion of urban culture is believed by some to carry with it its own destruction. Prophets

are pronouncing its doom and showing how it is riding for a fall. They tell us that it must be succeeded by a dominant rural culture, for that alone is germinal and full of life, whereas the urban is struck with death. The arguments pro and con on this hypothesis are too long and too philosophic for consideration here. Whether the notion is mere wishful thinking on the part of frustrated ruralists or the sound prevision of social trends cannot be determined by balancing the claims one against the other. Only time can tell. All that we can be reasonably sure of is that the more dynamic destiny-controlling culture will dominate in the future as it has done in the past.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Make lists of the dynamic factors in both urban and rural culture and compare the two in order to determine which has the better claim to dominate.
2. Even where the economic life of a city is determined by the agriculture of the region in which it is located, why is it that the country does not dominate it?

3. In what respect does what the government is now doing to the farms duplicate what private industry did to the towns a century ago?

4. Will the diffusion of the secondary mores of the city thruout the country be more or less rapid than was that of the primary mores? Give reasons for your answer.

5. What lags do you see between the two in your community?

6. Are the rural leaders and educators of your community interested in overcoming these lags or are they interested in agricultural technology to the neglect of social adjustments?

7. What, in your opinion, is beneficial and what harmful to rural life in urbanization?

8. How far has the New Deal for agriculture brought more harmonious relations between country and city? Cite specific cases.

TECHNIQUES OF RURAL CHANGE

COUNTRYMEN everywhere in the world are traditionally adverse to change. The American farmer is true to type; he is notoriously conservative. As one has said, he "can go along as he always has and as his father did before him and still keep going."¹ Howbeit, he is much less stagnant than the average Old World peasant, tho far more so than the city dwelling American. He has been resistant to innovating ways, reluctant to adopt scientific methods, and opposed to "new fangled things" in general. He has not been kindly disposed toward political and social experiments, for he votes down most reform measures having to do with improvement in education, sanitation, health, government, taxation and labor conditions. In politics he is generally a standpatter; in religion an unchanging "fundamentalist"; and in business matters an overcautious enterpriser.

The average urbanite, in contrast, is inclined to be radical. He seeks the new in business, proposes political and social improvement, and prizes whatever is "modern" and "up-to-date."

The specific causes of this difference between the cityman and the countryman are not far to seek. First of all, the environments of the two are different. One dwells in a man-made world that is never finished; the other in the world of nature, whose ways are established. The average countryman is a property-owner with his possessions at stake, whereas the average city man is a wage earner with nothing to lose but everything to gain. If a capitalist, the urbanite can more readily readjust himself if alteration comes than can the landowner and crop-grower. Above all, the people of the city are younger in years and so more pliable, are of many social

¹ Evelyn Dewey, *New Schools for Old*, p. 7.

and cultural elements, are followers of a greater variety of ways of getting a living. Hence, stimulation plays upon them, while stagnation surrounds the countryman.

Methods of Change

Altho the traditions of rural life do not favor change, the country is by no means changeless. On the contrary, American rural society is fairly progressive compared with rural society in other parts of the world. The American farmer is probably less bound by habit, less wedded to the old, less opposed to social reform than is the farming class of any other country with the exception of Denmark. The methods of effecting change in rural society are so vital that they must be carefully analyzed.

1. *The persuasive method.* This is the one most in vogue in all effort toward reform in country and city alike. It proceeds upon the assumption that the communication of ideas will lead to their performance. Back of this assumption lies a more fundamental one, which holds that people are rationally motivated. Hence the widespread resort to preaching and to the appeal of ideas. But this method has been greatly overrated and overworked. Judged by results, it is of doubtful value. For men in general are not primarily rational. Their essential conservatism argues as much, for the rational are normally radical. James Harvey Robinson attempts to show that only one-fourth part of the human mind is predisposed to change. The civilized man's consciousness rests back on the animal consciousness, the child consciousness, and the savage consciousness. The animal mind, with its instincts, its curiosity and impulse to fumble and grope; the child mind, with its prejudices and misapprehensions and struggles against the censorship of elders; the savage mind, which was man's till the last 5,000 years, with its anthromorphic and conservative ways, are all three still playing a part in the civilized mind, which is critical, speculative, skeptical, and originative. The three former minds that we possess, or that most men do, generally dominate the fourth, or civilized mind. For this reason, most all the world is very conservative. It conforms,

it changeth not, it does not venture, but returns under the pull of instincts to its old and customary ways where it is sure.

The countryman, living in a *milieu* that does not stimulate the civilized part of the mind overmuch, answers less, if anything, to the rational appeal than does the average city person. The reformer's message falls mostly upon deaf ears. Only the few are able to harken and to take heed.

This basic condition is often modified, however, by factors favorable to the rational appeal. If there be many youth, the persuasive method will meet with much more success than otherwise; for youth responds to ideas as age does not. If, again, the people be largely pioneers, there will be a similar response; for the pioneer also is a man of change, else he would not have pioneered. He is receptive to ideals and acts upon them as few others do. Thus, the frontier of America has ever been the home of our most vigorous political and social idealism. The West and the Northwest are its chief abiding places today. There the farmer has been persuaded by reform programs, by the tenets of democracy, by the coöperative movement, and by the gospel of progress. Upon these pioneering and youthful peoples the persuasion that has left other rural sections largely cold, unmoved, and barren has fallen as seed to spring up in abundant fruitage. The Granger movement, Greenbackism, Populism, Free Silver, the Nonpartisan League, and the La Follette movement are the major causes in which response has been manifested. Still again, the persuasive method is more effective when applied to the primary mores than to the secondary. Rational variation may be secured in the things that have to do with getting a living when people cannot be moved with reference to those of less vital import. Says Keller: "It is not hard to demonstrate to an ignorant person in this country that he should learn to read and write; he can see that by living in this society. Similarly for his interest is it that he shall use the English language. Tests lie all about him and are immediate and decisive. But try to persuade him by abstract argument to give up the vendetta, to renounce anarchistic leanings, or to change his religion and you fail. There are no immediate and decisive tests at hand. You cannot demonstrate

that interest will be subverted by change; you cannot even secure visualization of evil consequences. . . . The more nearly custom (the folkways) represents direct reaction on environment in the actual struggle for material aids to existence, the more rational a test does it undergo, and conversely, the more derived the societal forms, the more clearly do they fall under the tests of tradition rather than reason." ²

"You can persuade a savage of the inadequacy of his stone hatchet long before he can be made to see that his family system is capable of being superseded by one yielding better satisfaction to his interests." ³ The American farmer has been somewhat influenced by the sort of ideas that would show how two ears of corn might be made to grow where one grew before but in most other things he has remained essentially unmoved.

Not only does the persuasive method often miss the mark, but, what is worse, it may accomplish harm. It may agitate only the emotions and educate not at all. Says Sumner of agitation: "Every impulse given to the masses is, in its nature, spasmodic and transitory. No systematic enterprise to enlighten the masses can be carried out. Campaigns of education contain a fallacy. Education takes time. It cannot be treated as subsidiary for a lifetime and then be made the chief business for six months with the desired results. A campaign of education is undemocratic. It implies that some one is teacher and somebody else pupil. It can only result in the elucidation of popular interests and the firmer establishment of popular prejudice. On the other hand, an agitation which appeals skillfully to pet notions and to latent fanaticism may stampede the masses. The Middle Ages furnished a number of cases. The Mahdis, who have arisen in Mohammedan Africa, and other Moslem prophets have produced wonderful phenomena of this kind. The silver agitation was begun in 1878 by a systematic effort of three or four newspapers in the Middle West addressed to currency notions which the Greenback proposition had popularized. What is the

² A. G. Keller, *Societal Evolution*, p. 132. Copyright by The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1915. Used by permission.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

limit to the possibilities of fanaticism and frenzy which might be produced in any society by agitation skillfully addressed to the fallacies and passions of the masses? The answer lies in the mores, which determine the degree of reserved common sense, and the habit of observing measures and methods, to which the masses have been accustomed. It follows that popular agitation is a desperate and doubtful method. The masses, as the great popular jury which, at last, by adoption or rejection, decides the fate of all proposed changes in the mores, need stability and moderation. Popular agitation introduces into the masses initiative and creative functions which destroy its judgment and call for quite other qualities.”⁴

2. *The demonstration method.* Where preaching and efforts of persuasion have failed to get results, another method has been resorted to with singular success. The method is that of visual demonstration. It is estimated that about one in seven adults can reason from principle to practice or can be influenced by lectures, reports and bulletins. But four out of five adults will learn new practices only by seeing them performed. Thus with about 86 per cent of the people amenable to change chiefly by this method, it becomes of first-rate importance.⁵ It has been extensively applied, particularly in the alteration of the subsistence mores. Results obtained by it have been nothing short of revolutionary.

This method is distinctly an American invention in its application to rural life. It grew out of the efforts of the agricultural experiment stations to get farmers to adopt the results of scientific experimentation. Bulletins and institute lectures were without much effect until someone observed that experiments conducted on farms were imitated by the farmers of the neighborhood. Hence, by means of these coöperative projects, in which the stations and actual farmers took part, the value of the demonstrative method became apparent.

This method was given large vogue thru the efforts of Doctor Seaman A. Knapp, an agent of the Department of Agriculture in

⁴ From Sumner's *Folkways*, pp. 51-52. Copyright by Ginn and Co.

⁵ C. B. Smith, "Principles and Achievements in Adult Education Under the Smith-Lever Act," *Proceedings Fifth National Country Life Conference*, 1922, p. 71.

the South. He began to employ it in Texas and Louisiana in an effort to curb the ravages of the boll-weevil. From that small beginning a nation-wide movement and organization built upon the idea gave the coöperative agricultural extension work, carried on jointly by federal and state governments. The County Agricultural Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent and the Boys' and Girls' Club work are its main products and lines of endeavor. The County Agent is engaged in some 3,075 counties, conducting and supervising farm demonstrations covering practically every phase of the business of farming.

The Home Demonstration agents are at work in three-fifths of the counties. They are engaged in showing farm women and girls better ways of home making. The Boys' and Girls' Club work is giving vocational training and cultural education by the same general methods to the youth of the country. It centers attention not only on some important phase of agriculture or home life in each community, but it seeks also to develop social qualities, leadership, and the general personality of country youth. In 1938 one-fifth of the farm boys and girls 10 to 20 years of age were being instructed.

This demonstration method has been found quite as effective when applied in spheres other than that of agriculture or home making. In matters of health and sanitation it has proved exceedingly valuable.

3. *The morphological method.* By this is meant the effort to produce change in social habits by altering the social structure, i. e., by means of organization. Rural reformers have generally assumed that they could do it in this way. Hence, excellent schemes have been drawn up and comprehensive social machinery devised for carrying them into effect. Not infrequently such machinery is actually set up in a community in the hope that it will run. Sometimes it does run, but in the vast majority of cases it does not run for long and proves to be so much motionless enginery, impotent to accomplish any work. Thus, when an attempt is made in this way to mobilize a rural community to some new ends and for some

new endeavor, all that usually comes of the undertaking is the lifeless machinery itself. The life cycle of rural organizations is definite and short. *Stimulation*, usually by some agency from outside the local community, is given in behalf of a specific interest. The *organization* is formed by electing officers, enrolling members, adopting a constitution, and outlining a program of action. The newly formed association attempts to *carry on* by itself and without the support of the original promoters. It meets with *difficulties* in fulfilling its aims, which probably prove to be beyond reach. Factions develop, indifference creeps in, conflicts with other local interests and institutions arise, and the organization *declines* and dies.⁶

Unless the spirit of community is present, i. e., a self-conscious unity of people who feel a need for joint action, no program of organization is likely to succeed. Only in exceptional cases will the movement for organization itself give rise to this spirit of community. Where it does so, the method of course justifies itself. Where it does not and where there was no real community to begin with, it proves futile.

4. *Deterministic change.* The most profound and far-reaching change in society takes place of itself—mechanically. It springs from several sources. One source is the vicissitudes of nature, such as floods, droughts, storms, plagues, pests, and the extremes of climatic cycles. The periodic recurrence of drought in the swing of the climatic cycle over sections of the West has been responsible for the migration of rural people in and out of that region. It has influenced political and economic movements also. Again, the ravages of the boll-weevil in the South have caused numerous readjustments in the afflicted areas and resulted in extensive population shiftings.

Another source is more directly social, such as crises, war, revolutionizing invention, and significant discovery. These set going chains of consequences which effect permanent alteration. The in-

⁶ See Kolb and Wileden, "Special Interest Groups," University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station, *Research Bulletin No. 84*, 1927; "Making Rural Organizations Effective," University of Wisconsin, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 403*, Oct., 1928.

vention of the cotton gin, reaping machinery, the tractor and the automobile are instances in point. Rural institutions and the habits of farmers are being changed by these devices.

A third source of alteration is found in the incidental consequences of purposive action. Much that happens is unlooked for, unplanned, and fortuitous. It transpires as the by-product of conscious endeavor. Often it turns out to be the main product instead of the one that was sought. The Farm Bureau movement, for example, was designed by the government for educational purposes. Once started, however, in parts of the country it became a powerful economic agency engaged in business coöperation. It has also developed political tendencies and rallied the farmers of the nation to bring pressure upon Congress to get desirable legislation. It was largely responsible for the Farm Bloc in the Sixty-seventh and Sixty-eighth Congresses.

Unintended changes come about in still another way. When the subsistence mores undergo transformation, as Keller has shown, the secondary mores tend to alter in conformity with them, i. e., the secondary will "consist" with the primary. This is illustrated with respect to the church. When the self-sufficient agricultural economy prevailed and farm stuff was produced for home consumption instead of for market, money was scarce and little used by the American farmer. The church was built and the minister sustained by contributions of work and produce. Religion was supported on donations. But with the development of commercial farming and the sale of produce for money, the business of agriculture shifted to a new basis. In keeping, the attitude toward the church has undergone a general change. The church support has become monetary and the obligation to render personal service in its behalf has given place to the practice of hiring things done for it.

5. *The contact method.* It is generally recognized that one of the most effective means of social change is found in contact of cultures—where peoples of different cultures come in touch with one another, cross-fertilization takes place. Perhaps nothing has been more conducive to progress.

In a certain sense this factor is operative with reference to rural

society. City culture and rural culture have for most of our history been spheres apart. The farmer has lived in a stagnant world remote from the dynamic centers of urban life. He has been relatively unstimulated and uninfluenced by them. Not that urban and rural culture have not always had a good deal in common in this country, but that what they have not had in common had failed to run up against its opposite in fruitful contact. But of late unparalleled agencies of communication and frequent contact have brought city and country together as never before. The result is, that wherever this has happened, country life has been greatly stimulated. Rapid urbanization has taken place.

One important consequence of contact between city and country is seen in the rise of coöperation. Individualism has been undermined by the knowledge of urban coöperation. It has begun to give way because it is unprofitable. Professor J. M. Williams has said: "The coöperative attitude which promises to transform rural life developed in other vocations before farming. Rural leaders saw business men organizing to raise prices and increase their profits; saw workmen organizing to raise their wages. They used these arguments with the rank and file of still individualistic farmers."⁷

The city class has been looked up to as superior, and its ways have been imitated. In matters of dress, recreation, moral code, and standard of living this is much in evidence.

6. *The compulsory method.* This is the method of law and government. It is also the method of social pressure where there is no legal sanction or governmental backing. Some change is wrought this way. A positive and aggressive faction may coerce the rest into altering their ways. The Empress Dowager of China issued an edict ending the opium trade. The European dictators have forced the collectivization of agriculture, altered the system of land holding, and compelled the acceptance of numerous other changes. During the Great War social pressure compelled people to support war charities, join organizations, buy bonds, and restrict food consumption. To rural America along with the rest, coercive measures were applied. Among other things, production

⁷ J. M. Williams, *Our Rural Heritage*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1925, p. 236.

was made compulsory, prices were fixed, the disposal of foodstuffs prescribed and the time of labor regulated by law. Of late the A.A.A., the Soil Conservation Acts and the Farm Security Administration have contained elements of compulsion. The last is exerting much pressure on educational agencies to support its program. Thus old habits and beliefs are being broken down and new ways established in the country.

So long as authority stands guard, its bidding is done, but when it relaxes its vigilance or goes off duty people tend to slip back into their old ways. The farmer turned his back upon social service organizations such as the Red Cross, his openhandedness ceased, and he went on a strike against the daylight saving laws after the World War. Very little, if any, permanent change was effected by the war-time compulsion.

Nevertheless some enduring change may be brought about by this method, altho force must be long applied to get permanent results. Perhaps more is accomplished when its objects are negative instead of positive. It works better as a restrictive than as a constructive agency. Otherwise governments might easily bring about all sorts of changes. But as it is, they can do but few things with any degree of success under a democratic system.

7. *The genetic method.* This method begins with the simplest elements of human nature and social behavior, i. e., reflexes, habits and customs, and out of them proceeds to develop new and more complex habits and associational modes.

Where all other methods fail, this one can be relied upon to get results if any persuasive method can. In proceeding to manipulate, the principle of preferential motives may be brought to bear. This principle indicates that men naturally act on a scale of behavior which runs from the basis of least cost and most satisfaction in effort to ever increasing cost and more enduring, if not greater, satisfactions.

I have elsewhere formulated this principle as the *Law of Rural Socialization*. This law is expressed as follows: "Coöperation in rural neighborhoods has its genesis in and development thru those forms of association which, beginning on the basis of least cost,

gradually rise thru planes of increasing cost to the stage of greatest cost in effort demanded, and which give at the same time ever increasing and more enduring benefits and satisfaction to the group.”⁸

This law of conduct is of particular significance in relation to rural change. By following it the individualistic, non-coöperating country folk may be socialized and organized. Latent gregariousness can be aroused and the play impulse utilized to get simple united action; under the stimulus of such action the work incentive can be brought forward and made to yield effective coöperation. And out of the socialized capital thus accumulated, the more difficult economic and cultural enterprises that have to do with community welfare may at length be ventured upon and realized.

Many instances could be cited where communities have been transformed substantially by this method. The achievement of Mrs. Harvey in the Porter school district of Missouri is a case in point. Evelyn Dewey's report gives us the facts somewhat as follows:⁹ Mrs. Harvey did not come to Porter with any specific and obvious program for effecting reforms in either ways of living or agricultural methods. Nor did she set about at once to impose ready-made organizations upon the community. Such tactics could only have aroused resentment and defeated her ends. Instead, she simply gave the families—hitherto isolated and self-centered on their farms—opportunities of becoming acquainted; became herself their personal friend and trusted advisor, and as such suggested the possibilities in their environment and broadened their social outlook. Thus little by little she trained them into social activity, not by obviously making over the community, but by merely “loosening forces that resulted in organization and movements.”

8. *The educational method.* In several of the methods already mentioned the educational factor is present; but what we have in mind here is education thru the schools. Formal education ought to be the most effective means of social change. Thru the schools as molders of childhood, new and better ways ought to be achieved by each succeeding generation. If they are not to any great degree,

⁸ N. L. Sims, *The Rural Community*, pp. 640-641.

⁹ Evelyn Dewey, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

the fault lies in what the schools teach. Confessedly they are concerned chiefly with teaching the culture of the past rather than with finding out any new things. The past tends to be idealized and the present to be perpetuated by the schools.

The rural schools are least of any the mediators of change. Such influence as they have exerted in this direction has been preponderantly adverse to rural society. It has tended to turn the footsteps of youth cityward. It has thus acted as a disturbing agency indeed, but not primarily for the advantage of the school community. Rightly directed, however, the rural school may be the most effective and dependable agency of regular and systematic change. It is at the bottom of the problem of a more adequate civilization for the country, for with the childhood and youth of today rests the trend of civilization tomorrow.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Whence comes more rural change, from voluntary efforts to alter conditions or from unplanned and unforeseen developments such as the introduction of a new mechanism, the loss of markets, a calamity, etc.?
2. What new lines of change would you like to see promoted by the demonstration methods?
3. Which is easier to introduce, a new method of crop production or a new type of organization? Why?
4. Which of the methods of change mentioned in the chapter are more

effective in the city than in the rural community? On what grounds are your conclusions based?

5. How far have programs looking to the improvement of your community followed the first principle of the *Law of Socialization*?

6. By means of what specific projects would you attempt to promote community organization in an unorganized rural community?

7. What kinds of organization have the fewest difficulties in your community? Why?

8. Evaluate the respective merits of the following methods of introducing a new practice into your community: (1) Induce a single influential family to adopt it; (2) Seek to get the whole community to adopt it all at once.

9. What change is resulting from the action of New Deal government programs in your community?

10. Debate the question: Resolved that in the long-run organized self-help will be more effective for the solution of the farmers' problems than governmental intervention.

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